

Philosophical and psychological ideas in the post-civil war novels of Ramon J Sender.

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PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEAS

IN THE POST-CIVIL WAR NOVELS OF RAMON J. SENDER

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(A thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.
at Queen Mary College, University of London.)

Abstract

The novels Sender has written since the Spanish Civil War are interesting above all for their ideas. These centre on two main topics: one, philosophical - the nature of reality -, the other, psychological - the problems of adjustment to reality. Such ideas and topics are not to be found in Sender's pre-Civil War works; nor are these works characterised by the considerable ambiguity and structural complexity of the later books which challenge the reader with doubts and questions rather than supply him with answers.

The quasi-autobiographical novels, in particular, among Sender's post-Civil War works, suggest that the war was a watershed in his life and thought. Certainly that is the major experience with which his fictional counterparts have to struggle - the non-autobiographical works often focus on other traumatic experiences. Certainly too, when Sender came to rework pre-Civil War material in post-Civil War novels his original views were either changed or - more frequently - questioned and presented as being no more valid than a number of quite different views. Moreover, the lives of Sender's fictional counterparts - in his post-Civil War autobiographical novels - amount to hypothetical, moral and existential variations on the author's own life, before, during and after the Civil War.

The complex structure and ambiguity of Sender's post-Civil War works are wedded to the philosophical and psychological topics they present and explore. Structure and ideas both reflect his response to the traumatic challenge which the Spanish Civil War forced upon his understanding and capacity for adjustment. In writing these works Sender has tried to shed some light on the reality of his own life - including its unknown

and unknowable aspects - and by so doing confirms, to the attentive reader, the profound seriousness and importance of Sender's post-war writing.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

A student of Spanish literature, living in Madrid in 1960, could be excused for not having heard of Ramón Sender, and certainly for not having read anything by him. Nothing of Sender's was available for purchase, neither from among the works Sender had published in Spain up to 1938, nor from those - the remainder - that he had subsequently published outside Spain. Torrente Ballester¹ made no mention of him, and it seems unlikely that the six lines Valbuena Prat² had seen fit to devote to Sender would have inspired a student to consult the Biblioteca Nacional or the library of the Ateneo. If they had, he would have found only one of the five works Valbuena mentioned. There would have been others by Sender, but by then, presumably, our student would have lost interest.

Yet this Spanish author, unknown and virtually unknowable in Spain, had currently some twenty-five full length works to his credit, setting aside innumerable articles published in many countries. Furthermore, he was the holder of the Spanish

¹G. Torrente Ballester: Panorama de la literatura contemporánea (Madrid, 1956).

²A. Valbuena Prat: Historia de la literatura española Vol.III (Barcelona, 1957).

National Prize for Literature¹ and had been singled out for praise by Pío Baroja.²

Slowly, at first, and then extremely rapidly, this situation was to change, until now, April 1975, following Sender's much publicised return to Spain - 29th May 1974 - and the publication of no less than thirty-six works, never before available in Spain, two of which gained important prizes³, there can be few educated Spaniards who are ignorant of Sender, and many must be acquainted with at least one of his works.

The recent history of the publication in Spain of works by and about Ramón Sender says rather more about Spain than Sender. Spain is still clearly living the aftermath of the Civil War and the publication and sales of Sender's works, like those of other exiles, reflect official censorship and public reactions to it. The period 1960-1965 saw a slow relaxation in Spain of official intolerance towards the works of political exiles.⁴ This

¹In 1935, for Mister Witt en el cantón (Madrid, 1936), hereinafter referred to as Mister Witt.

²"Tenemos entre los jóvenes un poeta: García Lorca. Y un novelista: Sender." - in an article in La Nación (Buenos Aires, 1933). The reference is taken from Francisco Carrasquer: "Imán" y la novela histórica de Sender (Támesis, London, 1970) p.8, footnote

11. All my references are to this revised edition rather than to the earlier one (Zaandijk, 1968).

³Premio de Literatura Española de la Ciudad de Barcelona, 1966, for Crónica del alba (Barcelona, 1965-66) hereinafter referred to as Crónica and Premio Planeta, 1969, for En la vida de Ignacio Morel (Barcelona, 1969).

⁴It would appear that it was this that accounts for the peculiarities of Simón Díaz's Manual de bibliografía española (parts 1 and 2 Barcelona, 1966, part 3 Barcelona, 1972). The first part, though detailing Sender's works published abroad, makes no mention of any work by Sender published in Spain. Only the third part contains a list, and then incomplete, of Sender's works up to 1938. Similarly, the pre-Civil War works of another exile, Francisco Ayala, are only mentioned in the second part, though his works published outside Spain are listed in part one.

relaxation slowly permeated universities, publishing houses and book shops. Thus 1962 saw the first lengthy studies of Sender carried out by Alborg¹ and Nora² and 1963 both Marra López's introductory work³ on the Civil War exiles, which contains a full bibliography of Sender, and also Lluís y Navas' psychological study.⁴ In the same year two doctoral theses⁵ on Sender were being written. In 1964, García López's history of Spanish literature,⁶ authorised by the Spanish Ministry of Education, appeared with a sensible if short and selective mention of Sender, and in 1965 the first books by Sender⁷ to be published in Spain after 1938. Since 1965, the flood of books by Sender has been accompanied by a limited number of useful critical studies and tools to help the reader. The most important of these have been by Peñuelas⁸ and Carrasquer.⁹

¹ Juan Luis Alborg: Hora actual de la novela española Vol.II (Madrid, 1962).

² Eugenio de Nora: La novela española contemporánea Vols.II-III (Madrid, 1962).

³ José R. Marra López: Narrativa española fuera de España (Madrid 1963)

⁴ Jaime Lluís y Navas: "Los sentimientos edípicos en la novelística de Ramón Sender" in Boletín del Instituto de Medicina (Barcelona, Año V, no.49, December 1963).

⁵ Rosario Losada Jávega: "Algunos aspectos de la novela española en la emigración : Ramón Sender" (University of Barcelona, 1964)) and Josefa Rivas' thesis "La senda de Sender" (University of Valencia 1964) which became El escritor y su senda (Mexico, 1967).

⁶ J. García López: Historia de la literatura española (Barcelona 1964)

⁷ Ramón Sender: Valle-Inclán y la dificultad de la tragedia (Madrid 1965) and Ramón Sender: El bandido adolescente (Barcelona 1965).

⁸ Marcelino C. Peñuelas: Conversaciones con Ramón J. Sender (Madrid 1970); La obra narrativa de Ramón J. Sender (Madrid 1971); Ramón Sender: Páginas escogidas (ed. Peñuelas, Madrid 1972) hereinafter referred to, respectively, as Conversaciones, La obra narrativa and Páginas.

⁹ Francisco Carrasquer: op.cit. Carrasquer's study is reviewed by G.G.Brown in The Modern Language Review Vol.68 no.3 (London, July 1973).

Outside Spain, the study of Sender and interest in him, have been unaffected by censorship, though undoubtedly the difficulty of obtaining certain works has had some influence. It would also appear that Sender's residence in the U.S.A., from 1942, has been an inspiration for research on him there. 1940 saw the first¹ of what were to be a number of M.A. theses presented in American Universities, and 1953 the first of the American doctoral theses. Among these particularly worthy of mention are those by King² and Olstad.³ 1970 was to see the completion of a doctoral thesis⁴ on Sender in Canada, and 1975 another in England.⁵ None of these theses have been published. Outside Spain, work on Sender has been published by Eoff,⁶ Bosch,⁷ Rodríguez Monegal⁸ and King.⁹

¹Vivian R. Trevarrow: "The Spanish Revolution and Civil War as seen in Some of the Modern Novels of Spain" (University of Southern California, 1940).

²Charles L. King: "An Exposition of the Synthetic Philosophy of Ramón Sender" (University of Southern California, 1953).

³Charles F. Olstad: "The Novels of Ramón Sender: Moral Concepts in Development" (University of Wisconsin, 1960).

⁴Peter Turton: "La trayectoria ideológica de Ramón Sender entre 1928 y 1961" (University Laval, 1970).

⁵F.C. Smith "The historical novels of Ramon J. Sender and the myths and rhetoric of triumphalism" (Cambridge University, 1975).

⁶Sherman H. Eoff: The Modern Spanish Novel (New York, 1961).

⁷Rafael Bosch: La novela española del siglo XX (New York, 1971).

⁸Emir Rodríguez Monegal: Tres testigos de la guerra civil (Caracas, 1971).

⁹Charles L. King: Ramón J. Sender (New York, 1974).

The work of Peñuelas must have made a substantial contribution to the demythologising of Sender within Spain. (And that of King outside Spain.) A certain disillusion,¹ after a period of fashionable interest, was to follow Sender's return to Spain when it was discovered that some of the things he said did not tally with the image of him that had been formed from afar, and probably without reading his works.² However, major work on Sender still remains to be done. Particularly desirable is a study of Sender's post war works, since it is these that offer most difficulties of interpretation, and show how different Sender is from the still current view of him as a left-wing revolutionary. The current easy availability of most³ of Sender's works provides an appropriate occasion.

The present study is an attempt to elucidate the main themes and ideas in Sender's works written after the Spanish Civil War, and to place these within the context of his whole life and work. The major danger of such a project is for ideas and themes to be considered independently of the works in which they are expressed, with the result that individual works are abused as artifices, and mistaken conclusions reached in respect of what the author really thinks. I have thought it better to avoid these dangers even at

¹See "Cuando vuelven los rojos" by 'Pozuelo' in Triunfo (Año XXIX, No.610, June 8 1974, Madrid).

²Antonio Machado's popular reputation has suffered similar ups and downs, for similar reasons. As José María Valverde, in his edition of Machado's Nuevas canciones y de un cancionero apócrifo (Madrid, 1971), remarks.:

...era mas fácil retratarse junto a la tumba en Collioure que leer con la necesaria lentitud y profundidad la obra de Antonio Machado - de consecuencias políticas más radicales probablemente, que lo que suponían sus ensalzadores en ese momento de la mitologización machadiana -. (p.38).

³Imán (Madrid, 1930), El verdugo afable, see below p. 6, and Los cinco libros de Ariadna (New York, 1957), hereinafter referred to as Los cinco libros, are still unavailable in Spain.

the risk of making little or no mention of all but the most important themes and ideas, by limiting myself to a small number of works which, I believe to be representative of Sender, and with one exception,¹ of lasting inherent, literary merit. As I hope to show, Sender is an extremely complex novelist: any approach that passed over his complexity would pass over at least part of his claim to lasting importance.

Having established the general criteria for the selection of works by Sender for study within this thesis, the problem was which works to choose from among his enormous post-Civil War output. Crónica as the most extensive of Sender's works, and as the one written over the major part of his life as an exile (1942-1965), naturally commended itself. Not only could this series of novels be expected to reveal Sender's main post-Civil War preoccupations, but also, closely related as it is to the author's own life and experiences, it could be expected to facilitate a study of his whole life and work. Moreover, in its full, nine novel version, it had not been the object of serious critical attention. Furthermore, Sender has been fairly happy to have it described to him as the "síntesis de todo lo que has hecho"² and has suggested that its last volume was "lo más atrevido y lo más difícil que he hecho".³ El verdugo afable, in at least one of its three versions,⁴ readily

¹Emen hetan (Mexico, 1958), see below p. 8.

²Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.159.

³Ibid, p.158.

⁴El verdugo afable (Santiago de Chile, 1952), The Affable Hangman (London, 1954) and El verdugo afable (Mexico, 1970).

commended itself too, since this was a work which at one and the same time depended upon and had changed three works that Sender had written before the Civil War. Insight into Sender's ideas over a period of some forty years might well be forthcoming.

Peñuelas¹ had given it some attention, but had not investigated its debt to earlier works by Sender, and his comparison of El verdugo afable with The Affable Hangman, which for many years Sender had regarded as the definitive version, left a lot to be desired. It was therefore decided to deal extensively with this work, primarily with reference to the English version. In an ideal world, without limitations of either time or space, my thesis should have included, at least, La esfera² and Los cinco libros for both novels are important in Sender's post-Civil War work. However, both Peñuelas³ and King⁴ had dealt extensively with the former, and though what I gather to be⁵ Turton's

¹La obra narrativa, pp.157-194.

²La esfera (Buenos Aires, 1947 and Madrid 1969).

³La obra narrativa pp.195-214.

⁴Op.cit., pp.81-106.

⁵I have been unable to obtain Peter Turton's thesis, and my idea of what it contains is gathered from a private letter he wrote to me on 19.6.74. In this letter he describes Sender as a "professional anti-Communist from 1937" and suggests that Los cinco libros was written because "Sender was scared by the McCarthy era". Whatever evidence Turton may have for these suggestions as to Sender's motives, and clearly I am in no position to express anything other than a general scepticism, all my understanding of the complexity and ambiguity of Sender's major, post-Civil War novels, of which Los cinco libros is one, leads me to affirm that at best Turton's suggestions are unhelpful and irrelevant in respect of literary interpretation and at worst, inaccurate too.

interpretation of Los cinco libros clearly needed prompt and thorough refutation, limitations of space suggested that, if any selection was to be representative, it was to be preferred that a work that did not cover much of the same ground as Crónica should be chosen. Las criaturas saturnianas,¹ a novel removed in time from the twentieth century, and largely removed from Spain, was selected. With it naturally came the earlier Emen hetan, which though of lesser merit was important as the germ of at least sections of Las criaturas. The initial need to refute the assertions of Rivas² and Olstad,³ made before Las criaturas was published, that Emen hetan was atypical of Sender, lost importance after Carresquer's study⁴ of both novels. However, there was much I disagreed with in Carrasquer's analysis, particularly with regard to his assessment of the main character, Lizaveta, and I continued to feel that this novel and its links with non-historical works by Sender were worthy of attention in this thesis. And thus the selection was made, with the hope that the limitations imposed by space and by the need to examine each work fully might be compensated by frequent reference to a wide range of other works by Sender.

¹Las criaturas saturnianas (Barcelona, 1968), hereinafter referred to as Las criaturas.

²Op.cit., p.173.

³Op.cit. Olstad discusses Emen hetan in a chapter entitled "Random Probings", under the subheading "A Typical Example"!

⁴Op.cit., pp.233-251.

It rapidly became apparent that in his post-Civil War works Sender addressed himself repeatedly and insistently to two major questions: the nature of reality and the problems of adjustment to it. Since these two broad questions subsume a number of smaller, important questions - Spain, war, love and religion - without in any way suggesting Sender's interests were limited, for example, to his native country or the twentieth century, it was felt appropriate to base the thesis title upon them. A further argument in favour of the title chosen was its implication, which I hope to justify by placing Sender's major post-Civil War ideas in the context of his whole life and works, that there is a fundamental difference between Sender's approach to the questions of the nature of reality and man's adjustment to it in post-Civil War novels from those written before the Civil War.

To facilitate access to the body of the thesis and to avoid unwieldy length of footnotes, I conclude this introduction with brief general indications as to Sender's life and works up to 1939. These indications are in no sense exhaustive,¹ the criterion adopted has been that of usefulness to the subsequent chapters.

Ramón José Sender Garcés was born into a fairly well-to-do family in Chalamera de Cinca in 1901. His father was village secretary there and also in Alcolea de Cinca to which the family

¹In part, because exhaustive biographical information about Sender is not available. King is the best and most reliable source. Peñuelas, particularly in Conversaciones provides useful additional information, and Carrasquer too can be helpful. Rivas is unreliable in all but her quotations from letters from Sender. Most of my information is taken from King.

moved a year later. The boy and his father got on very badly one with another.¹ Ramón was the eldest of ten children who survived to adulthood. Both parents and three of the four grandparents had been born in Alcolea. His maternal grandfather, B. José Garcés Luna, died before the boy was born. In 1911 or 1912, the family moved to Tauste, where the father was again village secretary. It would appear to have been there that Sender had Carrasco as a childhood rival, received private classes from mosén Joaquín (Aguilar) and first knew Valentina, the daughter of D. Arturo (Ventura) and D^a. Julia.² The boy was to attend the Colegio de San Idelfonso in Reus during the scholastic year 1913-14, as a boarder. In the course of that year the family moved to Zaragoza. The boy continued his studies in the Instituto in Zaragoza, whilst his father worked in an insurance business, 1914-1917. Apparently this began to fail, and the family moved again, this time to Caspe, where Sender senior became town clerk. During this period Ramón lived away from home in Alcañiz, supporting himself - in part at least - by working in a chemist's. In 1918 he was to pass his bachillerato and to proceed to Madrid where he registered at the University as a student of law. In Madrid³ the money he earned from writing odd articles, published in El Imparcial, La Tribuna, El País and España Nueva, was insufficient for him to pay rent and he lived out of doors. His studies were also affected by the influenza epidemic which closed the University. This period

¹See King: Op.cit., p.16.

²See Rivas: Op.cit., p.13, p.56, pp.62-63.

³Peñuelas: Conversaciones, pp.75-77.

came to an end when his father came to take him to the family home, now in Huesca. For the next three years Ramón acted as the editor of a local newspaper in Huesca, called La Tierra. His father was now a property administrator. In 1921 Ramón returned to Madrid to further work as a chemist's assistant and to his law studies, but never graduated. He went on to do his military service in Morocco, 1923-24, in the course of which he was decorated for bravery and promoted to the highest rank possible for a non-commissioned officer. He was attached to the Regimiento Ceriñola 42. From 1924 to 1930 he worked for El Sol in Madrid and thereafter contributed frequently to La Libertad and occasionally to Solidaridad Obrera. In 1927 he spent three months in gaol for alleged political offences. From his mid-twenties onwards Sender was active within the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo¹ and was a member of an anarchist group called Espartaco.² In 1933 he visited Casas Viejas, within a week of the repression there, as a newspaper correspondent. In May 1933 he visited the U.S.S.R. In 1934 he married Amparo Barayón. They were to have two children. At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted and rose to the rank of Major. He saw action both north and south of Madrid. After a period the news filtered through to him that his wife had been executed by the Nationalists on 11.10.1936 and that his brother Manuel had also been executed.³ Early in 1938 he took part in a pro-Republican propaganda mission

¹Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.45.

²Ibid., p.94.

³Ramón Sender: Contraataque (Madrid-Barcelona 1938) pp.301-305.

to the U.S.A. with José Bergamín. He finally left Spain late in 1938, embarking with his children - who were now dependent on him alone - for Mexico, via the U.S.A., in Spring 1939.

Of the some twenty works by Sender published in Spain up to 1938, only one¹ had no bearing at all on the events and realities of Spain in the 1920s and 1930s. Most have a direct bearing - e.g. Imán, O.P. (Orden público)² and Viaje a la aldea del crimen³ - and those that do not appear to have one on first examination give a false impression. Thus the relations between Church and State in Spain underlay El problema religioso en Méjico.⁴ The analysis of the communistic social organisation of the Indians in América antes de Colón,⁵ an organisation destroyed by the Spanish conquests, makes explicit comment on Spain's imperial past and the role of the Church, and an implicit comparison with how Spanish

¹Ramón Sender: El verbo se hizo sexo (Madrid, 1931). In a letter to Olstad, dated 11.7.1960, to which Olstad refers in a footnote to "The Novels of Ramón Sender: Moral Concepts in Development", p.11, Sender declared that he had written El verbo when he was fifteen or sixteen years of age. In a letter to Carrasquer, 1.12.1966 - op.cit., pp.207-8 - Sender said he did not want it to be included in the canon of his work, and to Peñuelas - Conversaciones, p.163 - he added he was ashamed of it and it had been published without his permission.

²O.P. (Orden público), (Madrid, 1934), hereinafter referred to as D.P.

³Viaje a la aldea del crimen (Madrid 1934), hereinafter referred to as Viaje.

⁴El problema religioso en Méjico (Madrid 1928).

⁵América antes de Colón (Valencia, 1930).

society organised itself, at a time - the eve of the Second Republic - when what Spain was and should be were burning issues. Similar implicit comment on and comparisons with the Spain of the 1930s underlay Madrid-Moscú¹ and Míster Witt.

But Sender's works up to 1938 were not only related to the immediate realities of Spain, more often than not they were also based on his personal experiences. Sender lived the aftermath of the Annual disaster in Morócco and used his experiences as well as the accounts of survivors in Imán. It was his visit to Casas Viejas that provided the material for Viaje.² It was largely his own prison experience that he recounted in O.P. And that penetrating analysis of anarchist psychology, Siete domingos rojos,³ was only possible because he was closely acquainted with anarchists and had worked with them. When he addressed himself to the relations between religion, sex and love,⁴ Sender was addressing himself to what were or had been his own problems.⁵

¹Madrid-Moscú (Madrid, 1934).

²Originally this appeared as a series of articles in La Libertad. Later it became Casas Viejas (Madrid 1933) and finally Viaje.

³Siete domingos rojos (Barcelona 1932).

⁴Carta de Moscú sobre el amor (a una muchacha española) (Madrid 1934) hereinafter referred to as Carta, and "Reflexiones sobre el amor" in Libro de las primeras jornadas eugénicas españolas (two vols., ed. Enrique Noguera and Luis Huerta, Madrid, 1934).

⁵In Tres ejemplos de amor y una teoría (Madrid 1969), hereinafter referred to as Tres ejemplos, which contains a shortened version of Carta, Sender explains the circumstances and object of its composition. He was currently sleeping with one girl whilst attached to another who was only interested in marriage. Carta was addressed to the second girl, her religious upbringing and middle class attitudes on love.

A recognition of the importance of Sender's personal experiences is key not only to an understanding of his pre-Civil War works, but also to an understanding of the formation of his general attitudes as the following quotation, from Conversaciones, makes clear - Sender is the first speaker, Peñuelas, the second -:

-Somos una parte de la sociedad, una parte responsable de todo lo que sucede alrededor. Allí donde aparece una injusticia lo menos que podemos hacer es denunciarla. Yo no espero... Bueno, yo no estoy seguro de que la sociedad de mañana sea más cómoda que la de hoy. Pero por lo menos no habrá escándalos flagrantes que hieran como ahora la sensibilidad de la gente honrada. Es decir, no se darán casos como el de ese pobre campesino de Réquiem¹ que moría en su cueva, después de cuarenta años de trabajo diario, honrado, sin protesta, sin una sola objeción. Despreciado por la población moría en un camastro de tablas en compañía de su mujer, envejecida prematuramente y en un lugar donde no había ni aire, ni fuego, ni agua, es decir, los tres elementos básicos. En cuanto al cuarto, la tierra... le esperaba abierta. Es decir, que acababa su vida en medio de una miseria realmente ofensiva para un hombre de cualquier tiempo, de cualquier lugar.

-Tú una vez dijiste que ese incidente, que presenciaste de niño...

-Creo que condicionó toda mi vida. Yo tenía entonces siete años y no lo he podido olvidar.

-¿Entonces, al parecer, te convertiste en un escritor revolucionario?

-No sé. Por lo menos fui desde entonces un ciudadano discrepante y una especie de escritor a contrapelo.

-¿Desde aquel incidente?

-Sí, desde entonces. No necesitaba como base para la protesta ningún libro de Bakunin, ni de Marx, o de Engels, aunque los leyera más tarde. Estaba convencido desde niño.
(pp.199-200)

In this regard, the importance Sender attached to the formation of attitudes in childhood and adolescence in a number of his novels, is clearly significant.

¹Ramón Sender: Réquiem por un campesino español (New York, 1960). It originally appeared under the title Mosén Millán (Mexico, 1953).

Sender's works up to the time of the Civil War describe the political, social, economic and cultural realities of the Spain of his time. Sender's descriptions are critical: he is particularly sensitive to those aspects of the politico-economic-social system which are unjust and oppress the simple, underprivileged man. Imán's focus of interest is upon the lot of a common soldier, Viance, in Morocco. The incompetence and cruelty of officers, and the underlying social injustice which puts some men, by virtue of birth and privilege, in absolute power over others, are condemned. The peasant soldier, Viance, - representative of the urban and rural proletariat - is a victim of the contradictions and injustices of the whole social, economic and political system and the incompetence and cowardice of the Spanish ruling class. The disaster of Annual is seen as an expression of these contradictions and injustices, and the novel may be considered as an accurate prediction of the social and political conflicts of the Second Spanish Republic. The main focus of interest in O.P. is on the psychology and aspirations of political prisoners, whom Sender describes in some detail. The monstrous, illegal outrages perpetrated against the anarcho-syndicalists in Barcelona by General Martínez-Anido in particular, cry out for drastic revolutionary action, and the sense of an impending, revolutionary holocaust is very strong. This holocaust is imaginatively visualized in La noche de las cien cabezas¹ in the form of a whirl-wind. The latter brings about the end of bourgeois society in Spain, and the heads of representative members of that society are whirled to a cemetery.

¹Ramón Sender: La noche de las cien cabezas (Madrid, 1934) hereinafter referred to as Noche.

on the outskirts of Madrid where they pathetically mumble their last, characteristic thoughts. This novel constitutes a savage critique of bourgeois society and its values. The last thoughts spoken by the heads all exhibit one thing about their former owners: that their lives were governed by what Sender describes as the "cult of the individual". As an alternative, in the last chapters, Sender sketches a society of collective values, where men work anonymously without thought of personal advantage or reward. Both anarchist psychology and values, and the problems faced by a middle-class intellectual with revolutionary sympathies are described in Siete domingos rojos. Through the situation of the journalist, Samar, a contrast is established between two different moral systems, those of the working-class revolutionaries and those of Samar's middle-class fiancée. The divided loyalties of the journalist express the conflict between those systems. The analysis of the Spanish attitude to love, in Carta and "Reflexiones sobre el amor", involves Sender in a critical analysis of Spanish social, economic and religious values which he suggests are part of a corrupt, unjust and decadent system. Quite how vicious that system could be, he details in Viaje.

Based on personal experience rather than ideology or abstract principle though the ideas Sender expresses through these novels were, and although his ideas are always conveyed through concrete examples and situations and he does not pursue points to abstract conclusions, he does implicitly make general philosophical and psychological statements, viz. that there is an evil in men and society and that evil can be

destroyed and in the circumstances of Spain in the early 1930s, it was likely to be destroyed. Vianca and the political prisoners in O.P. would not have suffered as they had but for an evil and oppressive system. Samar in Siete domingos rojos, and certainly his fiancée and the girl to whom Sender had written Carta, would not have had the problems they did have, had it not been for what Sender saw as the pernicious effect of their upbringing and particularly the influence of the Church. The love relationships of people uninfluenced by the Church were singularly free from problems.¹ With the monstrous injustices and inadequacy of the then current system and its values, and with a mounting groundswell of opposition to it, there were indeed grounds for hope for the creation of a juster, healthier, happier society and the possible values of which could already be visualised.

Such then was the general view implicit in Sender's pre-Civil War works. A close examination of the works in question however, reveals a clear change of emphasis between 1930 and 1934 and the beginning of something altogether new by 1935. Sender was concerned with the practical problems of bringing about the new society and became progressively less happy with the inefficiency of the anarchists, as he explained to Peñuelas in Conversaciones:

Entonces yo comenzaba a sentirme decepcionado por la falta de sentido práctico de los anarquistas. Había una desproporción tremenda entre el heroísmo, que derrochaban y la falta de eficacia de lo que conseguían. (p.94)

This unhappiness is already apparent in Siete domingos rojos, 1932, which unlike the earlier novels does not limit itself to general and specific denunciations of what is wrong, but introduces a

¹"Reflexiones sobre el amor", p.103.

critical note towards the anarchists who might previously have been expected to be key figures in transforming society. By 1934, it is apparent from an extremely sympathetic appraisal of Stalin that Sender gives in a review of a biography of the Soviet leader,¹ that Sender has become much more closely associated with communism. Sender admits that this was the case in the Prologue to Los cinco libros.

Todo esto no quiere decir que no haya actuado en 1934-36 cerca de los de Moscú y por cierto con una lealtad a toda prueba porque desde el primer día hasta el último de nuestra corta relación les expuse todas mis discrepancias. No conseguimos resolverlas y me alejé lo mismo que me había acercado. (p.vii)

Sender's concern for the practical side of revolution, and his concern for realities and personal experience rather than ideology, I would suggest, underly what is altogether new in Mister Witt. Perhaps Sender had begun to wonder if the hoped for revolution and destruction of evil were going to be achieved after all. Certainly that novel analysed and presented to the Spanish public of the day the failure of an earlier attempt at revolution, the Cantonalist movement of 1873. Furthermore, it is highly significant that that novel expresses considerable sympathy and understanding together with criticism for the main character, Mister Witt, who for reasons of personal jealousy behaved in a treacherous manner, both in respect of the revolution and a revolutionary leader. One might say that Sender was suggesting that in view of the immense practical difficulties of achieving a revolution, pause for thought must be given both to the individual whom one would formerly have categorised as evil and beyond redemption, owing to lengthy contamination by the system, and also to the general assumptions upon which the

¹Proclamación de la sonrisa (Madrid, 1934), p.151 and ff.

concept of a revolution and the destruction of evil were based.

Some mention should be made of Contraataque because of the very special circumstances in which it was written. First published in English¹ and French², this account of Sender's experiences and thoughts during the early months of the Civil War was clearly written for propaganda purposes. This is apparent in odd details throughout the book, e.g. the way the book ends,

Pronto os contaré como fue el triunfo... (p.305)

in which perhaps Sender suggests more optimism than he in fact felt. However, he was never a man to gloss over truths however unpalatable: the book suggests the Republican military organisation left a lot to be desired, and as Carrasquer states³ it was not well received either by anarchists or communists although in it Sender clearly states that he was a communist at that time.⁴

The Civil War and the Nationalist victory were extremely crucial and painful experiences for Sender. They were to mean the death of his wife, brother and many friends and a break with Spain which was to last thirty-five years. In terms of his thought and work, they were to signify his removal from the scene of all his early experiences and from the material out of which he had written all his works. They were to constitute a major disillusionment - unpopular, illiberal, undemocratic reaction

¹The War in Spain (London 1937) and Counter-Attack in Spain (Boston, 1937).

²Contre-attaque en Espagne (Paris, 1937).

³Op.cit., p.8 and footnote.

⁴Contraataque p.22.

⁵Gabriel Jackson: The Spanish Republic and the Civil War. (Princeton, New Jersey, 1967), pp.428-429.

had triumphed - and a challenge to many of Sender's philosophical and psychological assumptions. Clearly, if he were ever to write again about Spain, it would be with geographical and temporal distance. Clearly, he would never again be able to express the relative optimism in respect of the destructability of evil that had characterised all but one of his pre-Civil War works.

The inevitable change in Sender's thought and work, which this thesis is concerned with illuminating, may be summarised in Sender's own words to Peñuelas in Conversaciones:

Dejé de escribir una literatura de combate inmediato para escribir una literatura, por decirlo de un modo un poco absurdo, de iluminación. (p.91)

It is clearly idle to speculate how Sender would have developed if Spanish history had followed a different course, though Mister Witt does offer a tempting invitation in that regard, however, I would suggest that the Civil War had a beneficial effect on Sender's writing and thought, and that his most interesting, profound and lasting works have been written since 1939. My hope is that this thesis will successfully substantiate this suggestion.

CHAPTER II

The Affable Hangman

I. The Different Versions

There are three different versions of this novel, which I shall refer to as VA1,¹ AH,² and VA2.³ In choosing AH rather than VA1 or VA2 for detailed consideration, I have been guided by both internal and external considerations. To illuminate the reasons for my choice I list here the major differences between the three versions. Since these differences lie primarily between AH on the one hand and VA1 and VA2 on the other. I begin by indicating these. There then follows a mention of the differences between VA1 and VA2. The list is not exhaustive, but all important differences between the three versions are referred to.

To be found in "VA1" but not "AH":-

1. Ramiro's two years spent at the school in Reus (pp.29-65), containing his first hallucination. Associated are a number of subsequent references to it, and a second hallucination (pp.402-407).

¹Ramón Sender: El verdugo afable (Chile, 1952).

²Ramón Sender: The Affable Hangman (London, 1954 and 1963)
In references to this version, I use the 1963 edition.

³Ramón Sender: El verdugo afable (Mexico, 1970).

2. Ramiro's entering the Sigena convent as a girl (pp.79-94) and the subsequent death of Paulina and the letter from Juanita.
3. The suicide of Chino (pp.173-174), which is also to be found in O.P.
4. Ramiro's acquaintance with the young writer, Eduardo (pp.205-206)
5. Ramiro's acquaintance with various people in the Ateneo, Madrid, including Valle-Inclán's son (pp.257-258).
6. Ramiro's meeting Lydia's husband, Estrugo (pp.259-265).
7. Ramiro's meeting a keeper in the Jesuits' pine grove who was attracted by his halo (pp.129-133). Their second meeting and Ramiro's important conversation with Father Anglada (pp.321-340)
8. The detail of Lydia's disagreement with Ramiro in respect of the dream (pp.270-291).
9. The background to the manifestation of Lucia's madness (pp.364-374).¹
10. Ramiro's living away from Urbaleta's house from the time of the announcement of his engagement to their getting married (p.414). The people he lives with are those of La llave.²

Changes of detail from "VA1" to "AH":-

1. Aurora's death from poisoning (VA1) becomes a permanent disfigurement (AH).
2. The deaths at the circus fire of the lion-tamer's daughter and the equestrienne (VA1) become one death, that of the equestrienne (AH). Consequently (in AH) Ramiro has no fears that he might have eaten human flesh.

¹Also published separately in English. Ramón Sender: "The Clouds Did Not Pass", in The Pen in Exile (ed. P. Tabori, London, 1954), Vol.I, pp.321-342.

²Ramón Sender: La llave (Montevideo, 1960).

3. The two main priests (of VA1) - Astorga, whom Ramiro meets at the Duke's, and the Jesuit, Anglada - are telescoped into one, Anglada (AH). The very brief observations on the "vicious circle" behind which God is to be found (AH p.225) made by the priest of Benalup, appear to be taken from Ramiro's conversation with Anglada (VA1 pp.333-334).
4. The portrait of Alfonso XIII (VA1 p.9) becomes one of Franco (AH p.10), in accordance with a change of time-scale (see below, Additions to AH).
5. The name of the journalist is changed from R. Sender (VA1) to Juan Echenique.
6. The extra thousand pesetas from the circus is given not to Chino's widow and children (VA1) but to Ramiro's mother (AH).

Additions to "AH":-

1. Ramiro's experiences in the Civil War (pp.266-283).
2. Development of Ramiro's relationship with his mother, his imprisonment in the village, his diary (p.40, pp.45-55).
3. Ramiro's meeting Cojo in Jerez and his evening with the gypsies (pp.182-202).
4. Ramiro's letters from Benalup to Lydia and Paquita (pp.208-211).

Differences between "VA1" and "VA2":-

1. The only substantial difference between VA1 and VA2 lies in the omission from the latter of Ramiro's first year spent at the school in Reus (VA1 pp.29-50).

In a comparison between VA1 and AH, the case for the relegation of VA1 on external grounds is a strong one. There are four major considerations.

On July 11, 1960, Sender wrote to Olstad,¹ with reference to AH, saying that he himself prepared the Spanish text for translation into English and that he regarded AH as the definitive form of the novel. To this, might be added the fact that the translation was carried out by the author's second wife, Florence Hall.² On November 19, 1968, Sender wrote to Peñuelas,³ with reference to AH and VA1.

Lo que quité del Verdugo fue por razones esteticistas. Lo de la escuela debía ir a Crónica por ser autobiografico. Lo del convento con disfraz de hembra era una sugestion demasiado directa y casi un calco de un libro absurdo que circulo por Aragón en el siglo pasado titulado Vida de Pedro Saputo... Yo debía quitarlo. Lo había puesto porque me parecía poner un santo de madera sacado de una ermita en mi living room. Luego me parecio un abuso.

In the summer of 1967, Sender declared to Penuelas⁴ that, with the possible exception of La esfera, he would not revise what he had written:

Lo demás está en su estado definitivo, bien o mal.
Y ahí queda.

AH appeared within two years of VA1 and in the same year as Hipogrifo violento⁵ (the part of Crónica containing the account of the school at Reus, to be found in VA1 but not AH). It would appear therefore that Sender became dissatisfied with VA1 almost as soon as it appeared and immediately re-wrote it as two novels, AH and Hipogrifo violento, with which he remained satisfied for some sixteen years.

¹Op.cit., p.191 footnote

²They married August 12, 1943. They were divorced September 3, 1963

³See La obra narrativa, p.168, footnote to p.167.

⁴See Conversaciones, p.252

⁵Sender: Hipogrifo violento (Mexico, 1954).

A substantial case for the relegation of VA1 can also be made out on internal grounds. Such a case is, in the nature of things, more arguable¹ since it is based on the final meaning of the work and the means the author uses to express it. Furthermore, as a comparison between my own arguments and those of Peñuelas will make clear, it is often more useful to discuss VA1 and AH in terms of difference in the author's intentions rather than superiority or inferiority. Nevertheless, bearing all these points in mind I am convinced that AH is a more accomplished, polished and forceful piece of writing than VA1, and that it is more successful in achieving its manifest aesthetic and moral aims.

One of the points of distinction of AH is its existential relevance to the reader. A measure of identification between the reader and the main character is encouraged in the novel, and the author manipulates this forcing the reader to share some of Ramiro's moral and epistemological problems. Crucial to this identification and manipulation is the credibility of Ramiro, his life and the world he moves in. With the exception of the procession at the end of the novel,² in AH no incident or detail interferes with this credibility. In realistic terms, Ramiro, his life and the world he moves in are plausible. This cannot be said of VA1. The plausibility of the narrative is seriously disturbed by the fact that Ramiro is made the instrumental cause of not two deaths but five. The same may be said of the scenes where Ramiro is in the

¹See Peñuelas: La obra narrativa, pp.157-194 for a defence of VA1.

²I find this scene very interesting but aesthetically untidy within AH. For Sender's explanation of it, see Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.123.

convent dressed as a woman. Even without Sender's explanation¹ as to the source of the episode, it was apparent that it smacks of a literary model rather than a life-like incident. I would make the same observation with regard to the objectively verified existence of Ramiro's halo in VA1. The presence of this halo makes the world in which Ramiro moves one in which happenings of supernatural causation are known definitely to occur. It is not a world which the average reader can recognise as his own. AH substitutes doubt and uncertainty in respect of there being a fatal mark on Ramiro, as boy and hangman, which might or might not signify that he is predetermined in his life and choice of profession. The reader can identify himself with the possibility of human life being predetermined. Most readers will be unable to identify with the certainty of supernatural phenomena.

There are three main reasons for commending the omission (in AH) of the first hallucinatory sequence (VA1, pp.55-63) and two reasons in respect of the second (VA1, pp.402-407). Though insisting on the importance of these scenes, Peñuelas² acknowledges that the first is not without obscurity:

Es decir que el episodio suele producir inicialmente una impresión algo confusa. Quizá debido a ello el autor ha decidido eliminarlo en la edición inglesa. Aunque tal vez con pequeñas modificaciones y adiciones que insinuaran su sentido hubiera podido resultar menos oscuro.

His commentary on it, though illuminating, is selective and, as he admits in the passage quoted, he does not feel entirely at home with what Sender chose to write. There are, indeed, a

¹See above p.24.

²La obra narrativa, p.173.

number of points of difficulty¹ which he does not explain at all, presumably because he cannot, and when this is the case with a critic who, after long discussions with the author, has profitably dedicated a lot of time to Sender and to this novel in particular, the charge of obscurity is seen to be an important and serious one. I am not suggesting that the novel should be without difficulties or that it should reveal all its secrets at one or more cursory readings. My point is that in a novel which is manifestly designed to involve, stimulate and disturb the reader, obscurities of the kind illustrated by the two hallucinations have a deleterious effect. My second reason for commending the omission of both hallucinatory sequences concerns the effect they have on the reader's conception of Ramiro. Like the halo, they destroy the possibility of doubt in respect of the predeterminism in the novel. As Peñuelas² suggests most plausibly, the first sequence represents,

...un trasunto lírico-alegórico, una especie de previa y lejana síntesis, de los elementos temáticos de la narración. Es decir, una perífrasis poética de la evolución progresiva de Ramiro hacia un radical aislamiento, y del sentido último de sus actos y reflexiones.

The second hallucination³ can be seen as confirming that, as hangman, Ramiro is as alone as the first hallucination predicted. Even a general prediction and a relative confirmation of Ramiro's

¹In respect of the first hallucination, Peñuelas does not refer to what appear to be allusions to the deaths of Sender's wife and brother (VA 1, p.61), nor to the fact that certain words in the text coincide with the titles of poems Sender has written (VA1, p.59). (See Sender, Las imágenes migratorias (Mexico, 1960). Peñuelas does not refer at all to the second hallucination.

²La obra narrativa, pp.173-174.

³An important point Peñuelas does not make with regard to the hallucinations is that they both follow significant sexual experiences. The very first sexual feelings Ramiro has precede the first hallucination and this is of crucial importance in the boy's perception of the adult world of which he has begun to be a member.

destiny preclude the suggestive and existentially relevant ambivalence¹ which so enhance AH. My third reason only concerns the omission of the first hallucination. This is the only dream sequence in both VA1 and AH which is psychologically implausible. The reader is quite unable to believe that a boy of Ramiro's age could express even in dreams, the sentiments of the hallucination. Like the halo and Ramiro's time in the convent, the content of the first hallucination disturbs the reader's identification with the main character.

AH gains from the change in the time setting and from the inclusion within the novel of the period of the Civil War.² It is clear from what Sender says to Peñuelas³ that a major inspiration of the work was the feelings of guilt and responsibility that Sender had as a result of the Civil War. It would therefore seem obvious and appropriate to include the Civil War within the time scale of the novel. To the possible objection that specific reference to the Civil War might tend to particularise the very general statements of the novel on the nature of evil and reality, it can be argued that this danger is obviated by the addition (AH, p.289) of Ramiro's insistence that he was taking upon himself "the world's responsibilities", and by the suggestions that pepper all three versions that events such as Benalup were representative of a centuries-old conflict. In any case, a further particularisation of the historical setting in AH is no defect in a novel which

¹One aspect of this ambivalence is the possibility of seeing Ramiro's decision to become hangman as the result of his experiences of the world.

²The magnificent, climactic Civil War scenes are an appropriate and convincing prelude to Ramiro's final decision.

³Conversaciones, pp.121-123.

is so historically specific with regard to Benalup, the scene of the famous Casas Viejas incident, and which otherwise might tend to confuse a reader seeking to understand the novel's background. The change in time of the novel also has the merit of eliminating the chronological absurdity¹ of having a portrait of Alfonso XIII still prominent on the wall of the prison governor's office (VA1, p.9) some twenty years after the Casas Viejas repression and the declaration of the second Spanish Republic. Finally, the change in time makes clear the significance of the final procession. If, as Sender explained to Peñuelas,² it represents "una alusión a la España de la posguerra", the reader's chance of understanding the allusion is greatly enhanced with the AH time-scale.

To sum up, and without wishing to repeat examples of the general points I have made, it seems fair to say that Sender's decision to eliminate the supernatural and implausible elements of VA1 makes of AH a more immediate forceful and relevant novel. The reduction and elimination of secondary scenes and characters also has the same effect.

But how, then, is one to explain the publication of VA2, an only slightly modified version of VA1, in 1970? I do not deny both surprise and disappointment on discovering VA2 after careful study of VA1 and AH, but I have no hesitation in insisting on the overall superiority of AH. Understandably, perhaps Sender would feel unhappy at the thought that the final version of one of his

¹Pace Peñuelas, La obra narrativa, p.168 (footnote to P.167), there is no mistake in AH in respect of Franco's portrait. Since the first and last page of the novel relate to the period after the Civil War, it is appropriate that the Caudillo's picture should adorn the wall (AH, p.10).

²Conversaciones, p.123.

novels should be in English rather than Spanish. Bearing in mind that he said he did not want to revise his works further, one could understand his giving VA1 little more than a cursory revision along the general lines he had indicated to Peñuelas so that VA2 would not seriously overlap Crónica, which from the time of its first publication in Spain has come to be the most widely read and considered novel he has written. The alternative would have been for Sender himself to have translated AH¹ into Spanish - he would scarcely have charged someone else with the task of producing a final version in Spanish - which would have involved a much more radical revision and rethinking of the work than he was prepared for. Consequently, and of course this is purely speculative, he opted for the lesser of what were for him two evils and allowed the publication of VA2. The external considerations on the basis of which I argued for the relegation of VA1 are still important. It is still significant that Sender should once have considered AH as the definitive version of the novel and that he should have radically revised VA1 within two years of its publication. It is also particularly significant that he should not have eliminated the convent episode for the reasons he gave to Peñuelas.²

My reasons for preferring AH to VA1 on internal grounds are unaffected by the publication of VA2. My arguments can be applied with equal validity to considering AH as preferable to VA2.

¹This is largely what he did in respect of the final version of La esfera (Madrid, 1969) which is based on the changes Sender had made in an earlier version La esfera (Buenos Aires, 1947) while preparing it for translation into English The Sphere (New York, 1949) and (London, 1950). Note that in the comments Sender makes to this effect - La esfera (Madrid, 1969) preface -, the dates given for the English translations are incorrect.

²See above p. 24, quotations and footnote (3).

The English of AH, as King¹ remarks, often leaves something to be desired. It is sometimes a little imprecise in meaning, and contains a number of Hispanisms. However, it is quite readable and is largely free from the occasional inexactitude² which disconcerts and confuses in both VA1 and VA2.

¹Op.cit., p.126

²Two inexactitudes in AH should perhaps be noted. The change in the time setting of the novel (from VA1) situates the scene in the brothel of Da. Paca in the early 1930s, rather than somewhat earlier. It thus becomes exceedingly remarkable that Da. Paca, Prim's mistress, should still have youthful legs (AH, p.78). After 1939 Avda. del Conde Peñalver (AH, p.315) became Avda. de José Antonio.

II. Analysis and Commentary

The Affable Hangman is primarily a philosophical novel. It is concerned with the problem of understanding reality and what a man should do in the face of manifestations of evil in the world. It is a complex and ambiguous work and makes considerable demands upon the reader. For all these reasons, and for the inclusion of autobiographical material, it has a lot in common with a number of novels that Sender has written since the Spanish Civil War, e.g. La esfera, Crónica and Los cinco libros.

The structure of the novel reveals the complexity and ambiguity of its theme. The novel centres on the life and experiences of the affable hangman of the title, Ramiro Vallemediano. The first twenty or so pages and the last eight present him from the point of view of the journalist, Juan Echenique, who was present at four executions at a prison in Madrid at which Ramiro officiated. The remainder of the novel is composed of the executioner's own account of his life up to the time of the executions. Though this is presented for the most part as a third person narrative, it is in effect first person: the mind that views what happens inside and outside Ramiro's head is indistinguishable from Ramiro's own, nothing is described when Ramiro is not present, and when something - hitherto - unrelated to the hangman is described, it is seen from the executioner's viewpoint and no other. Thus The Affable Hangman comprises a quasi-first person narrative set within the framework of a real first person narrative, and the life of the affable hangman is presented from two points of view - his own and the journalist's.

At the beginning of the novel conventional attitudes of repugnance and rejection in respect of executions and executioners are well illustrated. Everything at the prison seems to be a matter of embarrassment and the subject of hushed whispers. The one expression, hangman, that everyone thought when reflecting on the executioners was the one expression that no one dared to use. Furthermore, the journalist's action of shaking hands with Ramiro was thoroughly disapproved of. It was as though no one wanted to accept the fact of the hangman's existence. Also, though there is no morbid insistence on horrific detail in the description of the executions, the reader is inevitably moved and disturbed by them and made to share the instinctive distaste of the witnesses.¹

The behaviour of Juan Echenique both emphasises and questions these conventional attitudes. In the face of the executioners he is torn between repugnance and curiosity. On the one hand he could be amused when waiting for Ramiro in a cafe, thinking,

... the waiter was going to take his coat, call him sir and show him to a table ... (p.9)

implying that the hangman was going to be treated like a normal human being when he was not one. On the other, he was not happy with the passivity and repugnance felt by the other witnesses feeling that if society was to have executioners it should be able to justify them to itself (pp.22-23).

¹Sender's deliberation is quite clear and his concern to stress the popular, public attitude to the hangman is apparent in his choice of title for the different versions of his novel. He could have entitled VA1 and VA2, El afable ejecutor de justicia, using the term preferred by the prison governor. Instead he chose the stronger, popular, more emotive verdugo. Similarly for AM, in spite of the evident inaccuracy - Spanish executioners use the garrote - Sender and his translator preferred the term hangman to any other. No other English word could approach the force, sense and overtones of the Spanish.

The reader, following the lead established by the journalist, approaches the account of Ramiro's life with split feelings. The account itself perpetuates and strengthens the dichotomy. On the one hand the narrational form encourages one to identify with the hangman, the effective narrator, on the other one cannot forget one's feelings of distaste deriving from the descriptions of the executions or the fact that one is reading a justification of the office of hangman. The matter becomes more vexing, for Ramiro is soon seen to be an extremely moral and clear thinking man and furthermore his life story begins with an account of him as a small boy when there was quite evidently nothing of the stigma or horror of the hangman about him. Yet we know he will certainly become one. Whether he likes it or not, the reader is forced by the novel to accept that a hangman can be both human and intelligent, and that conventional attitudes to the hangman, as displayed during the executions and as - possibly - felt by the reader in reading about them, are quite inadequate. Furthermore, by ensuring that the reader is not presented with a main character with whom he can happily identify or confidently condemn, Sender compels him to consider the main issues of the novel for himself and to come to his own conclusions about them. There is no omniscient narrator or authoritative author who intervenes to tell the reader what to think. The central ambiguity of the hangman, Ramiro Vallemediano, remains until the last page of the book.

The seeds of Ramiro's social alienation were undoubtedly sown in the village where he was born. By temperament he was a sanguine, lively boy who took a considerable delight in living and in the world around him:

Life for him was a continuous miracle. When he was thirsty and drank, he felt extraordinary pleasure. The same thing happened when he ate and went to bed after playing all day long ... And as if that were not enough, he dreamed. Dreaming brought him new pleasures, which he considered exclusively his own. (pp.27-28)

Furthermore, he was bright and talented, capable of mastering the village trades in record time and in completing the commission to paint the village hermitage to the satisfaction and approval of all. Yet Ramiro did not have a happy childhood. A major problem was the boy's mother. Socially and economically, her standing in the village was insecure. Her long term aim was to remove herself from the theatre of social disapproval and enter a convent. In the meantime when not considering Ramiro as a reminder of her past misfortune and present disgrace, she saw him as a tool to be manipulated for her own financial and social ends. In early childhood, the boy seems to have received normal maternal love and attention, but as time went on she treated him with hostility. The result was that the boy's mental independence of his mother suffered a premature birth. He became sceptical of everything she said and relied on his own judgement. While things went well for the boy, the approval or disapproval of his mother was not particularly significant. Her hostility would disconcert and upset him, but life afforded him so many pleasures and there was so much generally accepted evidence for his talents - as a result of portraits he was commissioned to paint, their house was "swimming in abundance" (p.36) - that the boy was in no need of his mother's extra support, and nothing she could say or do could seriously affect his life. However, in respect of the poisoning of the apothecary and his daughter, Aurora, with which Ramiro was involved, the boy's youth, his mother's hostility, and the ignorance and

prejudice of the villagers - of which his mother too was a victim - all combined in a most unpleasant way against the boy. He desperately needed his mother's love and support and he did not get them. She spoke to the investigating judge of his "evil instincts", gossiped maliciously against him after the whole matter had been examined with the result that he became the subject of rumours and accusing fingers, and especially requested that he should be locked up in the village gaol after he had run away. The boy understood his mother's perverse motives,

Out of Ramiro's vilification his mother was hoping to win, by way of contrast, some right to public esteem. (p.46)

but it was of little consolation to him. Awareness that he was the part-instrumental cause of a man's death and the permanent disfigurement of a young girl, would have been quite enough for the young Ramiro to contend with on his own, without his mother's adding to it. As it was he was quite overwhelmed by the experience. At one point, he seriously considered committing suicide. At another he kept a diary filled with melancholic reflections in which he generalised on the basis of his own limited experience:

Who made life? Life is ugly. I am wicked, but so is my neighbor. God made life and it is ugly. Aurora is a caterpillar. No. An angel smashed by a gigantic foot... We are all damned. Where is the Aurora who danced La Tarara with me? She swayed her hips underneath her dress. Round hips, and since she did not know that this was ugly, she did it very well. Now she is a smashed angel, with cotton in her ears. (p.51)

For she is really in the oven, with her aunts... She is in her aunts' oven. I am in my mother's. And everybody is in God's, roasting over a slow fire. Our fat melts away and we have a foul smell. (p.52)

The particular force of these images of God's fire can be seen if one refers to the first dreams Ramiro had of Aurora.

He saw her in the form of a wax doll, nude, melting and burning everything it touched. (p.31)

The image is a very delicate one: the reader has the impression of a fine balance of forces in a state of constant change - the heat is burning, the wax is melting, but the shape of the doll is unchanged. But Ramiro's amorous fires in the apothecary's shop upset the balance. Afterwards the wax doll had lost its shape: Aurora was fat and puffy "like a woman fifty years old" (p.49) her lips were swollen and the skin on her face was peeling. Most significant of all, his fires had brought to an end the delicate process of melting. After the poisoning, her kisses "smelled of melted wax", and she herself was, "...all melted wax" (p.51). Now God himself had apparently taken over the horrific process of destruction that Ramiro had initiated. The sight of a peasant killing a little dog and the later expression on the face of the dead dog (pp.53-54) also make Ramiro think of Aurora, the helpless victim of the poisoning. But the image was also applicable to him: like the dog, he too was a victim and he too had been betrayed.

Ramiro, unlike the reader, was unable to analyse these feelings and experiences objectively. He could not see one interpretation that offers itself to the reader viz. that without ignorance and prejudice in the village or without the malicious intervention of his mother, he might have considered the poisoning as little more than an unfortunate accident, and that there was no need for him to become obsessed with feelings of horror and guilt. As it was, he felt himself permanently tainted and spoilt by what had befallen him:

...I am indifferent to everything. Men, women, animals, things. God made them all. And yet... (p.53)

He did feel that there might be some hope and some future for him away from the village - he wanted to see the sea and associate with workers - but the appeal of such things was largely that of the unknown, and in general, one has the impression that in leaving his native village, he fled from a compound of feelings, symbolised by the bloody knife of a peasant, God's slow fire and his mother's oven, rather than from a specific, recognised evil in search of a solution. The cards are so stacked that the reader cannot help but sympathise with Ramiro at this point: he is a small boy faced with problems that overwhelm him. The reader may feel unhappy about identifying wholly with Ramiro's feelings and understanding of his situation, but he cannot help but wonder about society's responsibility for converting that young boy into a hangman.

The sequence of events and of Ramiro's feelings at the circus closely followed that of his native village. Happiness, delight in living and the pleasures of the senses, gave way to despair and pessimism and the need to flee, after his involuntary involvement in the death of the equestrienne and the circus fire.¹ Again he

¹As with the poisoning incident, it is possible to interpret Ramiro's part in the circus fire as a manifestation of something deeply significant about Ramiro and his destiny. One could approach the novel, for example, following the view of Richard Birkin, the main character of D.H. Lawrence's Women in Love. (D.H. Lawrence is an author Sender admires.) In the passage that follows Birkin ponders the significance of the fact that his friend, Gerald Crich, had accidentally killed his own brother:

There was such a thing as a pure accident, and the consequence did not attach to one, even though one had killed one's brother in such wise. Gerald as a boy had accidentally killed his brother. What then? Why seek to draw a brand and a curse across the life that had caused the accident? A man can live by accident and die by accident. Or can he not? Is every man's life subject to pure accident, is it only the race, the genus, the species, that has a universal reference? Or is this not true, is there no such thing as a pure accident? Has everything that happens a universal significance? Has it?

had been betrayed and manipulated by those he trusted. Although in this second incident Ramiro was more lucid and analytical than he had been in his native village, again it was a compound of subjective feelings and impressions that made him flee:

He did not wish to see anyone, or to go on breathing that air which smelled - or still seemed to smell-of burned flesh. (p.69)

The smell of the burned flesh of the equestrienne - or Ramiro's imagining of it - signified his involvement in the circus fire and the death of the equestrienne. It also linked in his mind with his own amorous fires which had led to the apothecary's death and the disfigurement of his daughter. He imagined he could see the circus tragedy, but it was not the equestrienne's skirts that were ablaze, it was Aurora's (p.68). The incident of the circus fire reinforces on both a conscious and unconscious level Ramiro's distrust and suspicion of society, the adult world and reality. Furthermore, the circus fire confuses him. On a conscious level, he finds he can acquit himself of guilt in view of his own ignorance and the obvious criminal intent of the circus manager. On an unconscious level, the horror of the two incidents - the one superimposed on the other - does not allow him to feel easy. Also he cannot see his way clear through the moral dilemmas and conflicts of interest that the circus fire raises. He was entitled to a further thousand pesetas, owing to him by virtue of the contract he had signed with the circus manager. But to claim the money would have meant that he would profit from a criminal act that had brought about the death of a good friend of his, the equestrienne. On the other hand, if he denounced the circus manager, the whole company, including his friends, would undoubtedly suffer. Faced by his first major decisions in an adult world,

Ramiro was initially paralysed:

"I am a coward and a wretch," he said to himself aloud, "because I don't dare to denounce the circus manager to the authorities. Nor, on the other hand, do I dare to accept the thousand pesetas still owing to me, according to the contract." (p.69)

The decisions he finally did make amounted to a total withdrawal, as far as that was possible, from the whole affair. He did not denounce the circus manager, so avoiding causing harm to the circus company. He did not claim the thousand pesetas, so avoiding gaining personally from a criminal act. Furthermore, he even refused to spend the eight hundred pesetas he still possessed from his first payment at the circus. (By a curious infantile logic, though, he felt no compunction in sending the money to his mother to enable her to purchase entry into the Sigena convent.)

Learning for the first time that deception could be profitable,¹ Ramiro began to see that, despite what he had been taught as a child, adults were often ambivalent in their attitude to sin. But at the same time as he came to this - for a child - fairly radical conclusion,² he expressed his continued confidence in

¹Cp. the mixed feeling of Pepe Garcés when Planibell successfully lied to Felipe's father and thereby gained a telescopic sight for his rifle, Crónica, Vol.I, p.409

²Spic of Emen hetan, pp.61-62, following a similar argument reached even more radical conclusions. For Spic, all human behaviour was hypocritical. Both Spic and Ramiro's observations on morality come as a response to an experience of suffering. The fact that Sender should describe the same process and some of the same ideas in two different novels suggests that he attaches importance to it and that we - the readers - should do so in The Affable Hangman. The ideas and attitudes of the two characters differ considerably as do the reader's sympathy with Sender's two creations. Spic is a formed character: his social alienation is complete and his metaphysical rationalisation of it is dogmatic. Furthermore the reader has not witnessed the process by which he came to be the

the church and the defenders of conventional morality:

... (Renaissance) popes sold Christian white slaves to Turkish sultans. Was that a sin? "Probably," he concluded, "we have invented sin, knowing that no one can avoid the tremendous acts determining it. And we hate sin and we love it, we fear sin and at the same time we profit by it, irremediably. Maybe the popes are more aware of this mystery than we are." (p.70) (My italics)

An evening spent in a brothel in Madrid taught Ramiro more about the dubious morality of the adult world. He was confused to find that what his upbringing - presumably - had taught him to regard as a house of evil had all the trappings of middle-class respectability and religious devotion:

... the house looked like any other. There were religious prints in expensive frames on the walls, and a discreet silence throughout the house. (p.77)

Barely had he overcome this shock than he discovered that the girls in the brothel who applied themselves to the entertainment and pleasure of their clients without deceit, were the objects of scorn. The men who enjoyed sexual relations with them, treated them with disdain. Ramiro knew no such hypocrisy: he admitted to the appeal of one of the prostitutes - a trifle excessively no doubt - and at all time treated her as an equal and a friend.

The general direction in which his early experiences were pushing him is seen clearly in his observations on a medieval auto-da-fe that he saw depicted in the Prado:

At the top was God himself, no less. The religious dignitaries on their thrones came next. Below them were the nude culprits burning at the stake, and at the very bottom the people... The only pure thing there, he reflected with sarcasm, was the executioner. (pp.83-84)

socially alienated individual that he is. Ramiro's views are tentative and confused, the process of his social alienation is not complete and since one has seen the events that may make Ramiro want to withdraw from the world, one cannot help but feel that such a withdrawal were it to take place would be as much an indictment of that world as of Ramiro.

In his village, at the circus and in the brothel, Ramiro had encountered deception and hypocrisy: people pretending to be good, kind and honest when they were not so at all. In the medieval depiction of society at an auto-da-fe, the only person in respect of whose nature there could be no ambiguity was the executioner and for that reason he appealed to the boy. He was very tired and hungry when he reflected on the picture, and he did so "with sarcasm", which implies he did not altogether hold the view he was expressing. However, the hint is enough for the attentive reader, who is in a better position to see what is happening to the boy than Ramiro himself, for he knows that Ramiro will become a hangman. The same may be said of Ramiro's discussion with Goya that takes place in front of the Maja Desnuda in the Prado. The choice of behaviour that Ramiro is seeming to consider through the imagined words of the painter, is not being considered at all. It has already been decided. Here is what Goya says:

"A man who starves to death with eight hundred pesetas in the lining of his coat is mad. Of course, everyone has a right to his own madness. But do you think that money is the price of the equestrienne's life? So what? That woman's life was worth no more than that of the circus lion or crocodile, also burned to death. It is true that you reach these ^{extreme} conclusions without ceasing to live outside of, and on the margin of what others call life. What would happen to you if you really entered into it?" Saying this, Goya laughed with his thin lips, and went on talking: "I stole. And I killed. Not only a rival or enemy. I would have killed, and without the slightest remorse, that pretty nude creature they call the Duchess Cayetana whom you are contemplating now in my picture. I only admitted one norm in my life: to live and to be in a condition to paint, to express my life. What does the rest matter?" ... "We consume ourselves, burning. You have only begun to burn, and your fire is young. Take the money out of the lining of your jacket; eat, drink, and burn; and come to see me again tomorrow with your body and soul satisfied." (pp.85-86)

Though Ramiro is still turning over the matter in his mind, the reader knows well already that the terms and images of Goya's

argument totally preclude the possibility of his following the painter's advice. If spending the circus money and entering into life signify "burning", Ramiro would never voluntarily do so. "Burning" meant the destruction of Aurora's youth and beauty, the death of the equestrienne and the apothecary.

With the anarchist, Graco, and his friends, Ramiro's half-conscious, half-unconscious rejection of the world and adult values is again called into question. There was a particular charm about Graco and his wife that deeply impressed Ramiro:

Libertad and Graco had come to seem like his own brother and sister, and in the ease with which he had accepted this feeling he saw something miraculous beyond his power to understand. (p.90)

Out of his admiration came the desire to emulate them:

"They are the happiest beings in the universe." And this happiness, incomprehensible at first, he was beginning to feel. To be like Graco seemed to him the end of a complicated process not attainable by everyone. "If I could eventually become one of them..." he pondered, fascinated. (p.92).

But there was a tremendous distance between Ramiro and anarchism. His early experiences had made him inhibited with regard to new thoughts and spontaneous feelings (p.90). In spite of what he had read about the social and political doctrines of his time (p.48), and the fact that he had been the victim of some of the things that were wrong in society, he had no interest in the social programme of the anarchists. As far as Ramiro was concerned, the anarchists he met had already achieved their goal. There was no need for a revolution (p.92). Nevertheless, they insisted on social responsibility:

Society is badly organised and we are all responsible. (p.89)

And Graco died, in the furtherance of the anarchists' social

programme. In prison,¹ we see Ramiro turning over and over in his mind the questions raised by the ideas and example of Graco. At times, the imagined voice of Graco in the wind would taunt him, criticising him for not exploiting his freedom to the full:

"Freedom is not in the street. You have freedom with you. You are locked up with all your immense freedom. And you say you don't wish to enter life?" (p.95)

At times it would urge Ramiro to accept his ineluctable responsibility:

"I killed for love, you through error, others because of hate. Most of those still on the outside kill through omission. Through omission, understand? They are the worst criminals, those who risk nothing. And Cojo? Ask Cojo why he killed the cardinal. And after talking to him perhaps you'll decide to intervene in what you call life, even though you still don't know what it is." (p.97)

Ramiro began to grope tentatively towards an eclectic compromise: he would follow the anarchist's example and die like him. Such a death would be an end in itself. It would have a certain inherent glory but no ulterior purpose or use. Such a death would subsume Ramiro's admiration for Graco, his continued inclination

¹Like the poverty Ramiro knew in his first days in Madrid, the prison episode is based on Sender's own personal experiences. (See above, p.11). These experiences are put to different uses in four of Sender's novels, O.P., VA1, pp.144-175, AH, pp.92-110, and Crónica, Vol.III, p.123

The prison episode in AH is an abbreviated, condensed and modified version of O.P.. Apart from changing the name of el periodista to Ramiro Vallemediano and from reducing the number of character portraits of prisoners, when preparing the material of O.P. for inclusion in AH, Sender made further changes which clearly distinguish the two novels. For example, O.P. contains the account of the suicide of Chino, who had been condemned, unjustly, to death. Partly as a result of this O.P. is a novel in which violent political activism is considered to be desirable and justified. By contrast, the prison episode of AH, which omits the suicide of Chino, is made to serve the more limited function of contributing to the growing body of suggestive evidence which makes Ramiro feel increasingly uneasy. Ramiro is a more critical and questioning figure than el periodista and the issues are less clear-cut. (Both VA1 and VA2 contain Chino's suicide.)

towards suicide, but it would not involve him in the practical, social issues which concerned the anarchist but not Ramiro:

"I too would know how to die like that," he thought. The usefulness of his death did not matter. A preoccupation of that nature could not occur to anyone. There are no useful deaths. But there could be a certain glory in dying like Graco. (pp.92-93)

But Graco's voice contested almost every point Ramiro made; an almost unrelieved pessimism squashed Ramiro's notion of glory, a death could be useful and Graco's had been so and the one obstacle that might have prevented Ramiro from accomplishing his plan - the need to enter life - was singled out for praise:

"I held up the bank. Everything went well, even my death. If I had only been wounded, the police might have got confessions and information out of me. Not because I am capable of talking out of cowardice, but because they employ chemical means, drugs that destroy the will. My victory was just one rung on the ladder of everyone's failure. Because we all fail. You all fail. Everything that lives seeks its own destruction. Through pleasure, or pain, just the same as through indifference. The only interesting thing in all this is your resistance to getting into it all." (p.101)

Ramiro's general doubts in respect of social responsibility and participation in life are seen clearly in one incident in the prison. After protesting vigorously when a guard hit a prisoner on the grounds that,

... any man imprisoned should protest, no matter what the reason... (p.102),

he immediately began to criticise his own behaviour:

"I am playing don Quixote stupidly..." (p.102)

Hungry and in the airless darkness of the punishment cells, Ramiro began to doubt the value both of protesting and of staying on the margin: he found himself unable to argue against his projected pessimism in the words of an imagined minor demon, before the demon made off. Thus, the following words went

uncontested:¹

"With general acquiescence or protest all of you watch sin passing and become part of it. With the hymn to innocence you sing your own servitude to crime... You will not achieve anything either by staying on the margin. On the margin of what? Of life? And you, what do you know about where the margin of life is?" (p.105)

Yet there was much that was wrong in the prison system that cried out for protest and change and Ramiro saw it: there were fundamental truths underlying the cynicism of the words of the imagined Latin demon who spoke of the diabolic nature of the mighty system comprising the Church, the Stock Exchange, public morality and government, supported by Roman law which enshrined the right to possess (p.104), truths which disturbed Ramiro both in prison and afterwards. He also knew that in his own case the law had been unjust and in Chino's it had been criminally so. In short, if Ramiro's acquaintance with the anarchists and his period of imprisonment did not cause him to alter his early resolve to stay on the margin of society and the adult world, in many ways they did make him uneasy, thoughtful and self-questioning. A consideration of social responsibility - Graco's constant theme - and a horror of the system of law, were to remain with Ramiro and to be very important when he made his decision to become hangman.

¹In O.P., pp.125-128, el periodista contests the demon's arguments with vigour and confidence: Marxism with its armies of twenty-five million unemployed will give the lie to the demon's cynicism. The demon was not allowed to make a voluntary exit but was chased away by el periodista who threw a crust of bread at it. The unanswered comments of the demon in AM establish the mood of greater doubt which characterises this and other novels written by Sender after the Civil War. Ramiro is grappling with moral and epistemological problems which presented few or no difficulties to Sender's pre-Civil War protagonists.

Immediately after the circus fire Ramiro had still been able to enjoy fleeting moments of happiness and delight in living. Following his acquaintance with Graco and his period of prison these moments became shorter and rarer. Ramiro had become pessimistic and more morally preoccupied. The fame and importance of Goya no longer interested him, and whereas formerly they had sufficiently impressed him for him to consider - albeit briefly - any attendant necessary moral sacrifice, after his gaol experiences he could dismiss the painter and his temptations:

... he ... allowed himself to laugh inwardly at Goya whom he considered trapped by all the tricks: love, social importance, beauty, religious faith, may be. (p.115)

Too many unpleasant things had happened for him to feel easy either about the untroubled, privileged existence the Duke¹ offered him:

Ramiro was almost happy ... but he put himself on guard against his optimism. His stay in prison had changed the order of his thinking. (p.115)

However, he was not sufficiently impressed by Graco's ideas and example to feel he could ally himself with them:

... the memories of Graco seemed to offer him a kind of moral example. (But) Cojo, Romerito, Graco, Chino had accepted the game and become involved in it. In that he considered them incautious, weak and in a certain way innocent. That innocence was a sign of inferiority. (p.126)

Thus faced with the opportunity of committing a typical anarchist act, killing Alfonso XIII, he does not do so. The whole thing would end in a scandal and nothing of lasting value would be achieved (p.119). Graco's death and Chino's naivety had given him no grounds for optimism and, furthermore, he realised that a lot of innocent people would be likely to be involved. Ramiro

¹I can see no grounds at all for the suggestion that the Duke was probably Ramiro's father. (See J.L.Alborg, op.cit., p.41.)

was, at one and the same time, too fearful and too perceptive to commit himself to the anarchist cause. (For example, he noted temperamental and psychological similarities between Father Anglada and Cojo, p.111, and the Duke and Chino, p.113)

The intervention of the Duke gave Ramiro the opportunity of seeing from the inside a society totally different from what he had known with Graco and in prison. The life style was as different as if they had been too different planets (p.74). Ramiro was placed in a position which enabled him to see a renowned society painter reveal his main-springs of action:

"He wishes to make a conquest of ... (the Duke) with a monograph." (p.118)

Such a pretension could not fail to amuse Ramiro, for the Duke was ignorant and indifferent to painting to the extent of not knowing who Zurbarán was. Ramiro was made aware of something of the hollowness of Spanish high society. An encounter with the King¹ tended to confirm the impression:

From his face one could guess that he had never read a book or known any circumstance^{in life} that obliged him to meditate upon himself seriously. He lived on the surface, enjoying and accepting in a sporting manner the good luck of having been born King of Spain. (p.122)

Shortly after being introduced into this society, Ramiro had a dream about his own execution. The dream reflected Ramiro's most recent experience and in particular the stark contrast between wealth, power and privilege on the one hand and poverty, impotence and deprivation on the other. But Ramiro's life-long condition of victim was also there, together with memories of Graco, his thoughts about killing the King, and a reprimand he had received.

¹The incident is based on a personal experience of Sender's. For a full account see, R. Sender: Examen de ingenios: los noventayochos, hereinafter referred to as Los noventayochos (New York, 1961), pp.10-12.

from the Duke. The details of the dream - the fact that Ramiro's execution was ordered by the King and that the Duke was the executioner - and Ramiro's subsequent comments on it, are important because they reveal how far his analysis of society had developed:

... the society he knew could be classified in two groups: hangmen and victims. His friend Graco had been executed by the servants of the King, that is, of the Duke. By people like the Director General of Police. The persons he had seen at the exposition¹ could be classified with the hangmen, perhaps, even the painter, the bad painter. Even, he added, the gentle Santolalla. All conformists shared in the complicity, in that complicity of the scaffold. (p.130)

Ramiro laid the responsibility for all the wrongs and injustice of the prison system at the door of the members of the hollow privileged society associated with the Duke. Obviously, Ramiro could never be a member of that society. The need to repudiate and change society is clearly apparent in his analysis. Indeed in the simplism of the dream and in his subsequent comments, Ramiro, as victim, identified with the anarchists who were both protesters as well as victims. But as we have seen Ramiro considered the anarchists naive, incautious and weak. Molinosism² filled the gap created by Ramiro's doubts, suspicions, fears and moral preoccupations:

This doctrine advised inner non-resistance to evil, tranquil debasement through acceptance of all miseries which come to the soul from without, until it reaches unbreathable solitude - in which the surrendered soul is gradually annihilated. "When that annihilation is almost complete," Molinos says, "a very profound inner peace is created in which, perhaps, merciful God descends to us with His grace." The expression quietism referred, then, to an atony of

¹An example of one of the Hispanisms I referred to, see above p.31.

²I use this rather ugly term, in preference to Molinism, to establish incontrovertibly that I am referring to the ideas of Miguel de Molinos (1628-1696) and not those of Luis de Molina (1536-1600). (Cp. J. Rivas, op.cit., p.78 and ff.)

the will which isolated man until it enclosed him in the castle of his own misery. Neither good nor evil. Once there he remained motionless, without the will to virtue, waiting for the help of God. Conscious of his own insignificance, of his own natural bestiality, of his own criminality, with his soul deaf and mute, with his spirit inert as a rock, man waited God, if He wished to come. (p.135)

In Molinosism the fatalistic pessimism, deriving from his horrendous experiences, which had accompanied Ramiro to Madrid and had made him sceptical both of the happiness the Duke's attentions seemed to offer him and of a favourable outcome to any anarchist act he might commit, found an answering chord. At the same time, the hope of God's intervention to help man in what Ramiro saw as their common fate (p.135)¹ by combating evil and injustice, allowed an outlet for all Ramiro's criticisms of Spanish society and his recognition of the moral - though not practical - example of the anarchists. Perhaps, by following Molinos' precepts, Ramiro could participate in the battle against evil without leaving the margin.

The complexity of the issues and the strong emotions

¹The notion of the companionship of God and man is a source of consolation for a number of Sender's characters in times of extreme existential anguish. See Federico Salla, in La esfera, p.79, Lizaveta, in Las criaturas, pp.226-227, and Ramón Sender in Cronica Vol.III, p.318. The novels express different degrees of pessimism and optimism: Federico Salla's attention is focussed on the struggle rather than on any anticipation of the outcome, though he is pleased that God is by his side; Ramiro Vallemediano, at this point in AH p.135, seems to feel that the struggle against perdition will be lost; Ramón Sender and Lizaveta seem convinced of the "fracaso de Dios" but find God's company stimulating and helpful. In all four novels, it is clear that the characters' individual problems have a universal dimension and that they are paradigmatic of universal problems of good and evil.

associated with the different options rendered difficult, if not impossible, that at this stage Ramiro should find a lasting moral and mental satisfaction in Molinosism, and in fact a further brief contact with anarchists set him again considering the points in favour of the libertarians' moral and political philosophy. The debate is expressed brilliantly through the hallucinatory dream¹ that Ramiro has under the influence of drugs.

The first part of Ramiro's dream shows heads illustrating the kind of moral features of individuals in adult society that Ramiro despised and hated falling on a cemetery on the outskirts of Madrid. One belonged to a morally and mentally dead member of the Church hierarchy, who had no charity in his dealings with others and who owed his hitherto unthreatened existence to the legal system:

He was evidently at that age when the inertia of

¹Ramiro's dream is an abbreviated, condensed and considerably modified version of Noche. Noche is clearly not a realistic novel, it presents a kind of hallucinatory vision. But Sender did not stress that it was a dream. There is no opportunity of interpreting the vision in terms of the psychology of a dreamer, nor of seeing it as an expression of wish-fulfilment. Therein lies the crucial difference between the dream in AH and Noche: the author offers no perspective from which one could view the content of the hallucination critically, nor does he ever suggest that such a perspective were desirable or necessary. In AH, Ramiro's psychology, his behaviour after the dream, the events of Benalup, and Ramiro's behaviour there, all suggest perspectives from which implicit, critical comments on the content of the dream should be made.

Of Noche, Sender has said,

... pretende ser un reflejo de la sociedad decadente de nuestro tiempo de transición.

(Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.123)

The object is of course relevant to the function of the dream within AH, and in fact Sender's comment did come in response to a query about the later novel. Occasionally, however, one wonders if AH would not have improved if Sender had tailored the material of the earlier novel a little more. After all Ramiro's dream reflects the decadent society of his experience.

dehumanized, old habits in all that is left. The eyes only saw errors all around. "I am the biggest error," he said to himself, and added: "There were a hundred persons who thought about killing me but no one did - no one did for fear of that pyramid of the law on whose apex the hangman waits." (pp. 145-146)

Then there was a series of heads who displayed the moral weakness of hiding their true nature under a mask - one of the things that always repelled Ramiro in the adult world was its deception and hypocrisy - :

(There was)... the intelligent man who disguised himself as a fool because he put everybody too much on guard; the courageous man who had to feign cowardice so as not to seem insolent; and the simpleton who had prepared for himself the silent mask of an intriguer so that people would not ^{come to} plunder him because of his simplicity. (p.151)

There was the head of a provincial professor who lacked the courage to do anything with his intelligence but shore up the status quo with his "gentle look of tolerance," and disaffected wives and husbands who did not dare to break relationships they hated but limited themselves to causing pain to their marriage partners. Then there were women like the woman who prayed to the white bears on the moon¹ and doña Paca, who sought to manipulate and exploit men's sexual feelings.² Then there was a country doctor preoccupied by the case for and against materialism and a philosopher concerned with the nature of his own identity: neither could progress in his argument; both were transfixed either by their own conclusions or their own questions. Ramiro's comments

¹An example of a weakness in the translation. The significance of the prayer is lost unless one recalls the language of the original. Hacer el oso means to woo without inhibition or to make a fool of oneself. The woman is appealing to an apotheosised representation of the foolish lover to help her keep her human foolish lovers.

²An example of inadequate tailoring of Noche. This never entered into Ramiro's experience.

on all these heads coincide on two main points; the heads belonged to people who were afraid and they had all got into the game:

"Poor people. They are all afraid. Of what? Why? If one accepts death from the beginning, why be afraid? But, ah, they all want to have the right to hope and that must be paid for." (p.151)

"They are all afraid. All have ^{had} an immense fear of life. Why did they participate? Who ordered them to?" (p.154)

... those people had gone into the game, in their own way. (p.156)

The heads were associated with Christianity, which was the source of their hope, but in the dream the "Christian era" had come to an end. "The last moon of the Christian era" could be seen shining above the cemetery of Ramiro's dream, and within Ramiro's dream that era was seen as something past:

"The Christian era was not so bad, with its jealous acts, its petty crimes, its theoretical virtues ... its genuine hope... Everybody was hoping for something, and everybody was afraid his hope would not materialise." (p.145)(My italics)

The second part of the dream announces the new era and its new values. The men of the new era were not afraid; they did not fear death.

"... those who live true to their pure man-ness, without the perversion of personality, think that death is only the counter-affirmation of life ... There are many who watch death approach with tranquility. They have filled their mission and walk in the sun waiting for an accident which does not worry them, for they know that it does not depend on them." (p.158)

The "heads" when they appeared again, bore all the trappings of wealth, social status and life-long interests,

(Some came with) ... tiaras and purple mantles ... Some wore tail coats and others sports clothes. With parchments in their hands, top hats, daggers in their belts. (pp.158-159),

illustrating their concern to distinguish themselves from one

from another. By contrast the men of the new era were naked and unpreoccupied with personal fame or importance. They had a natural confidence in themselves and in the permanent importance of their work together stretching forward through future generations; in short, they felt immortal in their common humanity:

"Man knows that his essential quality, man-ness does not die... Man, father of man, is the beginning of all things. And the end. But since things, have neither beginning nor end, nameless man is infinite.... The man who carves a rock, sings a song, drives a trolley, or builds an air-plane, subdues the infinite and gives proportion to it. But only so long as he conserves his man-ness in purity... without the childish madness for differentiation." (pp.158-159)

The success and achievement of the men of the new era was clearly apparent in the third part of Ramiro's dream. A period of time appeared to have elapsed:

The posts of the Carabanchel wireless station looked taller. The dolmen was visible. There was something new in the cemetery... Bees were flying about. They hovered over the wild flowers whose stems bent slightly under their weight. Ramiro, who had read Virgil, said to himself: "Bees and graves have been friends since Mount Hymettus. Bees on the gravestones represent immortality." (p.163)

The cemetery was not a scene of desolation. A strong feeling of peace permeated the atmosphere and bees, symbols of immortality, abounded in the final resting place of men who had "conserved their man-ness in purity."

Very shortly before the dream Ramiro had been in the C.N.T. clubroom, and had met Cojo and other anarchists for the first time since he was in gaol. He had heard speak of a "Graco plan of peasant agitation." Ramiro's dream was structured and inspired by the anarchist plan, of which he had been given no details. The dream presents the realisation of an imagined anarchist plan. The heads that fall on the cemetery in the dream were Cojo's (p.151) and it seems clear that at least one

of the dismissive portrayals of the heads corresponded to the description of it on a card in the filing cabinets at the C.N.T. headquarters (cp. p.139 and p.150). The heads then would appear to be the anarchists' targets either for assassination or at least repudiation. In the dream, miraculously, both objects are achieved. The nude men of the second part of the dream were anarchists: the young man who enunciated their principles resembled Graco, and the principles themselves had a lot in common with what Graco had said and done; he had helped Ramiro and robbed the bank without thought of himself or personal reward and was concerned only with his principles. The nude men of the dream were able to,

... watch death approach with tranquility. (p.158)
regarding it as nothing more than an accident. Graco had had that tranquility and as a result Ramiro had been able to regard his death as an accident. (p.92)

The dream illustrates Ramiro's hope for a simpler, better world. A world in which the anarchists' achievement would be commensurate with their moral worth, where the impracticality of Chino would be no obstacle for the realisation of anarchist goals. A world where bourgeois society and "the pyramid of law on which the hangman waits" could collapse without the complication of the involvement of innocent people which say, the killing of Alfonso XIII entailed. In this world, Ramiro would no longer need to feel nervous and pessimistic about every real or potential participation of himself or others. He would no longer find,

... the depravity of others pushing him towards the ambit of his own depravity and wishing to enclose him in it. (p.136)

everytime that he attempted to live in accordance with what he

believed to be right. The only misgivings he could have, and does have during the dream, are on the subjects of the reality and validity of his vision, and of his qualifications for being spared the condemnation of the heads and being considered in the category of the nude men.

From the very first, Ramiro had doubts about his moral qualifications for becoming an anarchist (p.92). This doubt was raised a couple of times in the course of the dream, but since it was a dream and a dream of Ramiro's hopes it was raised and inevitably resolved to Ramiro's, i.e. the dreamer's, satisfaction. Thus on the first occasion, Ramiro's concern is expressed through the patently ludicrous preoccupation that his illegitimacy might preclude him from being placed in the category of the nude men:

"They are not afraid. None of them is afraid. I have never been afraid either. But I am different. I am a bastard." (p.157)

And only two seconds' thought was required for him to feel easy again. When, the doubt was raised again by a professor's skull (p.159), but of course the fact that a head made the suggestion immediately and emphatically invalidated it. The derisive laughter and evident antagonism to Ramiro of other heads present further discounted any possible criticism. From time to time doubts as to the reality and validity of his vision impinge onto

¹Sender has admitted his interest in Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams, to Peñuelas in Conversaciones, p.144, consequently there are external grounds for interpreting Ramiro's dream in terms of wish-fulfilment, as I do, and for seeing Ramiro's resolution of his own anxiety through the dream in Freudian terms. The following quotations explain the point:

All dreams are in a sense dreams of convenience: they serve the purpose of prolonging sleep instead of waking up. (p.233)

... the censorship exercises its office ... to prevent the generation of anxiety or other forms of distressing effect. (p.267)

S. Freud: The Interpretation of Dreams, Vol.VII, of The Complete Works of Freud (London 1953).

Ramiro's consciousness, but they are never sufficient for him to reject the burden of the dream's optimistic and encouraging message. Thus, when he woke up after the second part of the dream, he wondered:

"But can all this be possible? Isn't it too fantastic and Utopian?" (p.160)

and after the final part of the dream, he was strongly aware that the reality of the dream was of a different kind from that of everyday life:

He tried to remember what he had seen but could not. It was like trying to think about life on a plane that was not life. (p.164)

But on neither occasion did he pursue his thoughts and after the dream it was the message of encouragement and optimism that was apparent in Ramiro's behaviour rather than any doubts or questions. Ramiro's attitude to the new day had a lot in common with the attitude of the nude men to the new era they had announced:

The breeze from the city was clean. The cement of the tall towers freshly washed by the rain smelled good. Sunlight capped the highest part of the buildings. A dewy calm rose from the green earth of the parks, from the fallen autumn leaves, and the wrought iron flowers of the street lamps. Everything had the cleanness, strength, and fragrance of a healthy awakening. (p.163)

His past life had been as completely superseded as the Christian era in the dream. He came to repudiate this association with the Duke and Lydia, and felt nostalgia for the time he had known Graco:

"How much happier I was in Graco's house," he thought. And he added: "There were no persons there. Death did not exist there, in spite of the bullets and the police." (pp.164-165)

And following the dream, for a short time Ramiro was gripped by a kind of ethical zeal: he greeted further details of the Graco plan with a long-absent enthusiasm (p.172), and agreed both to send the coded message signalling the start of the peasant

agitation¹ and to go to Andalusia to make a report¹ on the practical outcome. Furthermore, he finally made a decision on the basis of an estimate of his obligations to Aurora: he wrote proposing marriage. He would not marry for love or to achieve happiness, but more in the spirit of sacrifice of himself to principles. The plan came to nothing, for Aurora had married, but the general new inclination of which it was an expression came to light again when he was with Paquita: in a way he loved her and perhaps with her he could be happy but, as he explained, happiness and unhappiness were irrelevant to him. His life needed to be directed towards something else and only in, say, sacrifice would he find himself fulfilled (pp.170-171). Doubts and confusion would still sometimes beset him (p.173) and he behaved in a contradictory manner with regard to Lydia - after repudiating her strongly, he later met her and made love - but the dream had temporarily changed him, giving him a new assurance and optimism. The kind of simplification that the dream effected - passing over the practical problems of destroying bourgeois society and replacing it with an anarchist society - had enabled Ramiro to make the jump from the passivity of Molinos, which prior to the dream he had sympathised with, to the more active ethic of the anarchists, of which he had formerly been sceptical. There was a lot in common between the Molinosistic voluntary annihilation of individual will and the self in the hope of God's using them to His greater purposes, and the destruction of personality and the attendant subordination

¹Both actions are based on what Sender did. See Peñuelas, Conversaciones, p.85, pp.87-8 and above p.11.

of the individual to the collective concerns of man-ness, so important to the nude men. What differences there were between Molinos and the anarchists were of no significance in the post-Christian era presented by the dream in which evil and all grounds for pessimism had disappeared. Whereas prior to the dream Ramiro had turned to Molinosism away from anarchism, and from what was for him its innocence and naivety, afterwards he saw no important difference between them and in a single, unbroken association of ideas he could ponder on the anarchist message of the dream, repudiate the Duke, Lydia, Santolalla and their circle in accordance with it, contemplate leaving the margin of life and think about

Miguel de Molinos:

He remembered the sea, the prison, the dolmen, and the immortality of the bees, thinking that perhaps there was a solution. That he could, after all, get into the great game. But the ways of these people were of no use to him. What could his way be? Again he thought of Miguel de Molinos. About the friar who said to God: "Here I am. Here you have your handiwork. Let's see what you can do with your work. And what for." (p.166)

The major interest of Ramiro's hallucinatory dream is psychological. It reflects his desire for a simpler and better world and how through the dream he could deceive himself into thinking that it was possible. It reflects too the tremendous appeal of certain kinds of idealism - in this case anarchism - and the fundamental psychological and philosophical difficulty of passing just and humane judgments on men who were at once altruistic and potentially dangerous. The dream and its immediate aftermath represent a parenthesis of naivety in a life of singular scepticism and caution. Prior to the dream and again after Benalup, Ramiro never referred to the anarchists without at least qualifying his sympathy for them.

If the dream showed where anarchist idealism might lead in an ideal world, Benalup showed where it could lead in practice. Ramiro was forced to recognise the deceptive nature of his first vision and he did so, implicitly, in a second.¹ The carnage of the repression of the anarchist strike appeared in the same landscape as the formerly triumphant dolmen and the message was clear: the ideas of the nude men had led to the brutal killing of Curro Cruz and his twenty-two companions. A sense that "the world ended there" replaced the new era of the first dream. An almost unrelieved pessimism replaced Ramiro's former hope:

"It is natural, but it is cruel. Life should be something else, but it never will be." (p.226)

"Men will some day see life as it is, although they may not profit by the experience or be better. And to last until that day it is first necessary to go through all^{of} this. But is it worth the effort?" (p.226)

If from the former dream Ramiro felt that there could be a place for him in life and if in supporting the Graco plan he had tentatively and hopefully occupied it, Benalup and the new vision told him quite unequivocally that he was wrong. The charred heap of anarchist corpses expressed a fundamental truth:

"It's always been like that and always will be with those who enter into life." (p.227)

The reality of the nameless men who constructed the dolmen was replaced by a mere cipher of an unrealisable ideal:

"(The nameless man)... has gone. As you advance he moves on ahead. He is in a place that no one will ever reach." (p.226)

And it looked very unlikely that the thick-skinned, middle-class spectators of the scene would be at all interested in Curro Cruz's

¹See above p.51 and footnote.

attempts to follow him. The ambivalent spectacle of the "clean and naked" skeleton of Curro Cruz on top of the dolmen would not concern people whose only thought was material advantage.

What made the experience of Benalup and the observations implicit in Ramiro's dream so painful to him was that the anarchist cause seemed so irrefutably just and right. The peasants of Benalup were astonishingly poor, they lived in huts not houses and at best enjoyed seasonal employment. Yet if the surrounding uncultivated lands had been put to use and other measures of elementary justice taken, the peasants' lot would have been improved immeasurably:

"... what God wants, in all probability, is for everyone to live in peace and friendship in this prodigious corner where, with the natural resources equitably distributed, even those of the priest, it would be almost impossible not to be happy." (p.205)

The Graco plan was devised to achieve modest goals of this kind which Ramiro felt God himself would have approved. The peasants had not wanted violence nor had they prepared themselves for it. Their first concern had been to inform the mayor and the Civil Guard of the new state of libertarian communism and of their consequent dismissal. This was followed by a proclamation announcing the expropriation of the Duke of Medina Sidonia's lands and by the slow and painful composition of a letter to the district committee of Jerez asking for tools and horses to cultivate the untilled fields. Even when it was apparent that the strike had failed and that the peasants' demands were going to be met with armed resistance, the strikers did not prepare themselves for a struggle:

No one thought of self-defense. If they did they would not have stayed there (in Curro Cruz's hut) with only

two shot-guns, and they would have made the three women and the boy leave. They were awaiting developments, sure that they would be taken out of there manacled, bound for the Medina Sidonia jail. (p.216)

Yet the naivety, pacificism and right of the peasants was met by the most violent repression, and part of the responsibility for it lay with the strikers and the men who, from afar, had organised it. It was painful to have to criticise the anarchists, but what else could Ramiro do when faced by the total fiasco of Benalup.¹ Looking at the pamphlet which had inspired the actions

¹The uprising of Benalup was a fiasco and the repression was indeed a tragedy from several points of view. As Sender explained to Peñuelas (Conversaciones, p.98), news of the repression, partly thanks to Sender's report, was one of the things that brought down Azaña's government, and brought Lerroux's to power. But, and Sender does not mention this, Lerroux's first government was dependent on the votes of the C.E.D.A. (Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas) under Gil Robles and also on those of the Monarchists, neither of which was anything more than lukewarm in its support for constitutional republican government. Furthermore, according to Gabriel Jackson, under Lerroux:

Agrarian reform, always slow, came to a halt.

(G. Jackson, op.cit., p.123)

In short, the Benalup uprising proved to be totally counter-productive.

There is an important difference between the interpretation of Benalup in AH and in Viaje. The burden of criticism in the latter work is directed against the Republican Government, whereas the former contains important criticisms of the anarchists. A measure, one is tempted to conclude, of the change in Sender's views over the period, 1933-54. But the matter is more complicated, and more needs to be said. There has always been a certain ambivalence in Sender's attitude towards anarchism. In Siete domingos rojos, 1932, he expressed a conviction of,

... la enorme desproporción que hay entre lo que las masas revolucionarias españolas han dado a lo largo de sus luchas y lo que han obtenido. (p.7)

But at the same time he did not disguise his admiration for their "generosidad heroica, a veces sublime." Similarly, though in AH strong criticisms of the anarchists are expressed with specific comments on Benalup, in conversation with Peñuelas Sender's comments on Benalup are singularly devoid of such criticisms. There seems, furthermore, to be the same ambivalence in Sender in respect of

of Curro Cruz and his companions, Ramiro expressed strong criticisms of the organisers of the Graco plan:

"These pamphlets are edited by men who resemble rather unscrupulous geographers making a map... The geographer must establish his measurements accurately. The error of a centimeter on paper is equivalent to an error of fifty or a hundred kilometers on land. This is the kind of error made by the editors of the pamphlet when reckoning up the possibilities. A trivial assertion could be turned by reality into a catastrophe with rivers of blood for dogs to drink." (p.229)

He also was very unsure either that Curro Cruz's action could be justified (p.227), or that it would serve any useful purpose:

... it was more likely that people would feel compassion for Curro, perhaps along with the disdain some feel towards violent action and brutality. In that disdain the Moscow communists, the Catholics of Rome and New York liberals would concur. (p.231)

It was supremely right that Cojo and his friends should have been concerned with landless peasants in the province of Cadiz. Curro Cruz and his companions were inspired too in their vision of a more just and fair world and in the peaceful means they wanted to employ to bring it into being. But all the anarchists were naive and innocent in their conception of the here and now, and their moral worth was completely vitiated by this naivety:

Cojo and his friends struck him as inspired children, unconsciously playing with terrible objects. "And nevertheless," he repeated to himself, "they are the best I have found till now among those who have accepted the game. The terrible game of faith." (p.236)

violence: on the one hand he insists (Conversaciones, p.94) that anarchist violence was justified and that was never a point at issue between him and them, on the other that he never fired a shot during the Civil War and that his one failing was not to have protested enough against what he knew to be happening (Conversaciones pp.121-122). It is interesting to note that up to a year before his return to Spain, Sender was writing for a Spanish, Anarchist newspaper. See "Tolstoi", Frente Libertario, Año IV, Número 31, Paris, May 1973, pp.8-6.

So much for Ramiro's being finally disabused in respect of the anarchists.

The tragedy of Benalup associated in Ramiro's mind with his other experiences of misfortune and led him to a general pessimistic conclusion:

What I saw in Benelup is just one more incident in the great fatality ... Cojo killed in the name of social justice, the Guards kill in the name of the law, the entranced lover in the name of love, and the avenger in the name of hate. (pp.232-3)

"The conflicts between the justice of God and men" was centuries old, and the statue of María Mármol in Medina Sidona had been watching it since the time of the Phoenicians (p.230). Ramiro turned again to Molinos, the margin, and the implicit recognition that, without God, neither he nor any other human being was capable of achieving anything. His position coincides with that of the young priest of Benalup (p.225).

The moral position to which Ramiro was moving when fully acquainted with what happened at Benalup was apparent in a letter he wrote to Lydia when first he arrived in the village. He had not learnt sufficient of events to be completely disabused of the ideal of the nameless men, though on the basis of his own experiences and his personal difficulty in approaching the anarchist ideal and of his general awareness of what had happened, he realised the ideal was not for him. The margin was his place:

"On the margin. That's where I am. And from there the only thing I see is that everyone is unhappy and everyone wants to go on living - in inevitable unhappiness - just the same. Isn't it grotesque? If one sees the number of absurd contradictions surrounding us he cannot help snatching at that margin the way the lizard on the rock makes for the sun. That marginal business is the only privilege we have. Nature does not place us in life, but on the margin of life, and then we do or do not enter it. (p.209)

Any tendency he might have had to participate in the adult world had been checked by his perception of pervasive hypocrisy and deception in human affairs and on this basis, he began to indulge in half-serious, half-cynical reflections.

"Ever since I was born people have been talking about justice, in order to punish the weak. Wouldn't it be better to say: let us kill the weak? They talk about love, to justify its different gradations: rancor, distrust, lack of confidence, fear, and above all else the reverse of love which is not hatred but indifference." (pp.209-210.)

These in turn led to a completely serious, disinterested comment on the moral worth of the hangman. This comment is particularly interesting because, as can be seen, Ramiro does not consider for one moment the possibility of his becoming a hangman. However, the logic of Ramiro's argument shows him drawing closer and closer to the hangman; the hangman was fully acquainted with human hypocrisy and evil, as Ramiro believed he himself was, and was able to live without anyway benefiting from them. The hangman's was a clearly delineated role on the margin of society.

"I sometimes think that there is only one man who lives the truth and who, furthermore, deserves the gratitude of all the rest and does not ask for it: the hangman. Upon his head rests all the social order known until today, and still the hangman, aware of it offers himself as a propitious object for the scorn, fear and moral repugnance of all. Here is the martyr and hero, and the man who can be a smiling hero and martyr, because he has found the truth. The curious thing is that he found it on the margin... I am also looking for another truth. Will I find it?" (p.210).

There is a close parallel between the quietist position which Ramiro consciously and explicitly sympathises with after Benalup, and the moral position of the hangman which Ramiro believes he is discussing completely dispassionately and disinterestedly. In the same way that the quietist believes it is beyond human ability to fight evil and sin successfully and he must therefore resign

himself to them and accept them, leaving God to take any initiative, so the hangman renounces the hope and intention of changing what is wrong in society. Neither the one nor the other gains anything personally from their actions, yet both should eventually acquire a certain confidence and satisfaction.¹ Thus the smile on the face of the hangman Ramiro refers to, corresponds to the "very profound inner peace" (p.135) Molinos describes in the quietist.

In a similar way, Ramiro's letter to Paquita, written at the same time as the one to Lydia, also indicates how, unbeknown to himself, he was drawing closer to the hangman. Ramiro expressed an extraordinary intuition, that he could not explain that she would appear in his future. I would suggest that what Ramiro thereby expressed was the appeal to him of her kind of self-sacrifice. There are unmistakable parallels between social role of the hangman and that of the prostitute,² particularly in respect of the way that Paquita saw herself.

(One could imagine Sender writing a novel entitled The Affable Prostitute in which a journalist, required to visit a brothel to make a report for his newspaper, would initially find it difficult to say who were prostitutes and who were normal women. One of the prostitutes would relate her life story, telling how she had suffered in society because of society's double standards towards sex and how, despairing of all attempts to introduce sanity and justice into the sexual relations, she had become

¹In fact, as hangman, Ramiro only feels this confidence and satisfaction to a limited degree. He continued to be plagued with doubts and questions that had accompanied him throughout his life, and in the twenty years between his being appointed hangman and his meeting the journalist, Juan Echenique, he never succeeded in executing anyone. I shall comment on this in due course.

²See below p.82.

a prostitute. Fearful of making miscalculations in her attempts to change society's attitudes to sex and the structure of human relationships - she had seen how idealists' premature declarations of free love had led to the corruption of the innocents - she had finally integrated herself into the system. Scorned by the men who came and made love to her, as by the wives whose marriages depended on her, she left the initiative for reform in the hands of God who created men and women. The novel would end with a fantasy: state organisation and private ones publicly acclaimed her, acknowledging her importance in society.) Paquita was in total conformity with things as they were, as she explained to Ramiro:

"I have only done what other women do. We are all the same, Ramiro. We like to please, and be loved. I am very young. What could I have done? I please a man, he wants to go to bed with me and does. I please another, and the same thing all over again." We Women are neither good nor bad. We are just women." (p.256)

Yet we all know that, like the hangman, she was right in the centre of the web of social hypocrisy and was treated with scorn by all who benefited from her services. No illusions were possible in respect of Paquita any more than there could be in respect of the hangman. With regard to the question of self-sacrifice there is a quite clear development while Ramiro is in Benalup. After the first dream Ramiro had contemplated a certain kind of self-sacrifice in planning to marry Aurora. He no longer felt attracted to her, yet in marrying her he would remain faithful to sincere childhood feelings he had had. When the possibility did not remain open to him, he had turned his attention to Paquita who, from the first, had reminded him of how Aurora was before the poisoning. Finally, as we have seen, he decided to sacrifice any potential future happiness with her. Now at Benalup, Ramiro's partly un-

conscious inclination to self-sacrifice has again emerged as he indicates his sense of the moral worth of the hangman and the future place in his life of Paquita. Undoubtedly Ramiro's sympathy for quietism contributed at every stage to his inclination to self-sacrifice. There were elements of quietism in his first dream of the anarchist ideal, in his concept of the resignation and conformity of the hangman and in Paquita's unhypocritical acceptance of her social role.

The experience of Benalup brought to an abrupt end the brief parenthesis of relative naivety which derived from Ramiro's first dream. How he changed in the course of his stay in Benalup is seen very clearly if one reflects that he went there as an - admittedly passive - agent for an anarchist organisation, but while there, as he himself saw it, his task had very little to do with active politics:

"... what I am doing - the revelation and definition of an aspect of evil - seems more like a Christian moralist's task than a revolutionary's." To try to define evil, he believed, was man's first duty in the present time, and with this idea in mind he went on gathering details. (p.229)

And it was in the new role rather than the old that he felt relatively fulfilled. The repudiation of the anarchists was painfully difficult in view of the rightness of their cause but it was absolutely necessary for, in Ramiro's view, the disaster of Benalup was typical of a centuries old phenomenon for which there was no human remedy. The initiative for changing what was wrong had to be left to God, thus it was - reluctantly - Ramiro reverted to the passivity of Molinos and the margin. Associated with Molinosism - and associated with what Molinosism had in common with the anarchism of Ramiro's first dream - was his inclination to self-sacrifice or, more

precisely, the inclination to subordinate his own wishes, personality and happiness to something greater than himself. This was not challenged by the experience of Benalup, on the contrary it was fostered and increased by it and it was this inclination that can be seen to be pushing Ramiro slowly and inexorably towards becoming the hangman. But at the time of Benalup Ramiro's mind was too full of immediate, harrowing experiences for him to be fully conscious of what was happening to him. Indeed, very briefly in the Santa Cruz district of Seville, he allowed himself the indulgence of contemplating the possibility of total escape from evil through a watered-down form of quietistic passivity. The acceptance of total human impotence in the face of inescapable evil was too bitter a pill for him to be able to swallow immediately.

Ethical problems figure importantly in Ramiro's life, so too do more general epistemological ones. A case in point was the photograph he was sent from China by Ignacio de Juan. In the group of soldiers portrayed only one person was smiling, Ignacio de Juan's private hangman. Ramiro attached great significance to the photograph, spending more than an hour examining it under a magnifying glass. Clearly for him, here was substantiation of his suggestion that only the hangman had the confident smile of the man who had found the truth. The reader's first reaction, perhaps is to be critical of Ramiro: the detail of the smiling hangman was nothing more than an accident of the kind common to group photographs and of no significance. But the matter is by no means simple.¹ There are a number of suggestively significant accidents in the novel. For example there is the similarity between

¹See above p.38 and footnote.

Ramiro and Prim. For Doña Paca, who had been Prim's mistress, the physical similarity was remarkable (p.79) and it seemed, in her opinion, that there was a similarity of character too. Furthermore, the course of Ramiro's relationship with La Cañamón, Paquita, follows closely that of Doña Paca and Prim. In each case the man has wanted to marry the prostitute and she had refused on the grounds that she was a "bad woman". Paquita's vision of the future suggested further parallels:

"Some day I will be old like Doña Paca and I will have an ivory-headed cane. And I will talk to the young people about you with affection and a little fear. Doña Paca also has a little fear in her memory of Prim."
(p.258)

Ramiro does not comment on the parallel and the author, as almost always, is also silent. It is up to the reader to assess the evidence. On the one hand it is fairly simple to diminish the significance of the parallels: Paca/Paquita is a fairly common name in Spain, it is not unlikely that a nostalgic, old woman who dwells obsessively on the memory of her distinguished lover should see similarities between him and one of the countless clients who over many years frequent the brothel, nor must unfulfilled proposals of marriage to prostitutes be altogether unusual in a brothel. On the other hand, without prompting, Doña Paca did note a parallel and, more significantly, her observation proved true in a way she could not know: in the same way that the distinguished statesman of the September Revolution of 1868 was killed at the height of his career, so too would Ramiro, after a period in which he was involved with revolutionaries, suffer a kind of moral death by becoming a hangman. (Just prior to his becoming a hangman, Ramiro heard the bells of the village church

ring by themselves at night. According to village superstition this only happened when someone was going to die, p.287). The same general questions are raised over the accident of Ramiro being born a Vallemediano. According to the Duke, Ramiro appeared to be a typical member of a family which had known misfortune and had been rebellious since the time of the Anti-Pope Benedict XIII, at the beginning of the fifteenth century:

"You have something of ... (your grandmother) in your face, and your mother has written me things that have reminded me of the fatality which for centuries has been bounding that branch of the Vallemedianos." (p.127)

And it was indeed true that Ramiro had been singularly unfortunate to have been involved in the deaths of two people by the age of seventeen. Furthermore, he had been associated with revolutionaries and he had contemplated - briefly - assassinating the King. It was also true that Ramiro came to be very interested in Molinosism, a heretical doctrine for which several of his Vallemediano forebears had been executed and that this interest had arisen out of the intervention of the Duke in his life, who, while considering himself "an arm of Providence," recognised that Providence itself could be an instrument of catastrophe and fatality:

"Everything seems casual when Providence so wills, but catastrophe lies at the very heart of chance." (p.133)

But does the Duke's assertion stand up to close scrutiny?

Is this evidence linking Ramiro to what could be called the

leyenda negro de los Vallemediano substantial? One has to

recognise that the leyenda negro de los Vallemediano is a very nebulous notion. As the Duke himself says:

There had been a little of everything: rebellions, crimes, sporadic heresy. (p.132)

One cannot help but feel that there is little in this mixed bag which could be regarded as uncharacteristic of many a

distinguished family in Spain. Indeed a certain notoriety of this kind — over a period of some twenty generations — might even be expected from the poorer and therefore less secure branch of a distinguished family. And with regard to the heresy of quietism, it should be noted that it was very widely adhered to in the seventeenth century and received the blessing of one pope before being declared a heresy. A further weak point in the Duke's argument is the evidence he adduces for seeing Ramiro as the final link in the chain: he does so primarily on the basis of the physical similarity between Ramiro and his grandmother and on what the boy's mother had said about Ramiro. No respect at all can be given to the hysterical outpourings of the mother and with regard to the boy's resemblance to his grandmother there seems no reason why a simpler explanation without reference to fatalism should not be preferred. Furthermore, the Duke's suggestion that providence and fatality might use apparent chance to further their own ends adds nothing to his case. This kind of argument is hermetic: — having posited that there is a superior force manipulating human affairs, the Duke would reply to any attempted refutation with regard to a particular instance that the supernatural design was disguised.¹ However, having said all that, it must be admitted that matters of this general kind can never be resolved with any certainty and after one has recognised that the Duke's argument is weak in parts the suspicion that there might be something in what he says still remains. Associated with the suspicion that Ramiro's life might in some way be

¹El padre Zozobra (Sender: Novelas ejemplares de Cíbola (New York, 1961), pp. 119-124) presents a very skilful Devil who is most concerned to foster scepticism — of the Devil — in his potential victims.

linked to that of his forebears, of course, is the possibility that the pattern of his life might thereby be predetermined.

Sender offers us no more than ambivalent clues. Ramiro himself was often unsure what to think. At one particular moment of despair whilst in gaol he oscillated between total agnosticism and total credulity:

If most of the great mysteries as well as most of the little actual things of life were unexplainable - one of them being why he was in that particular spot - it was necessary to believe everything. Or nothing. It made no difference which. (p.103)

Ramiro gives all these matters his conscious attention in a conversation with Cojo and in the course of an evening he spent with gypsies in Jerez. One has the impression that at this stage though the parallel is not altogether exact,¹ that Cojo acted as a kind of philosophic mentor for Ramiro, in the same way that Cagliostro did for Lizaveta. General philosophical questions were discussed in the conversation between the two men and Cojo spoke of the difficulties and the possibilities

¹The parallel becomes less exact as the novel develops. Unlike Cagliostro, Cojo - on one occasion, Benalup - shows his judgment to be seriously at fault. Furthermore, he also makes the serious mistake - albeit momentary, pp.237-8 - of indicating his thinking could be very close to that of the despised communists. Sender's attitude towards communism has never had the ambivalence that has characterised his attitude to anarchism (see above p.62 & footnote). During the period 1934-36, though clearly with some reservations, he was a firm adherent (see above, pp.18-19) but when the break came, as soon it did, it was for what Sender saw as fundamental reasons:

... la base de nuestras discrepancias no era política. La diferencia estaba en nuestra manera de entender lo humano. Yo lo entendía a mi modo y ellos no lo entendían de modo alguno.

(Prologue to Los cinco libros, p.vii)

And the break was final. Since 1939, he has not changed his view.

of distinguishing truth from appearance:

"Nothing we see is ever true. ^{that} It's not untrue, either. But among the different things we imagine we always choose the most absurd. It's natural because we are all tired of truth." (p.184)

Now Cojo's remarks were designed to provoke and stimulate Ramiro, and in accordance with the most enlightened and modern teaching methods he presented Ramiro at one and the same time with a disguised problem and the means to solve it: he told a lie about his leg and then allowed Ramiro to meet someone who could disabuse him of that lie, viz. Julian. The plan may - in part - have backfired, for though, when Ramiro discovered the truth about Cojo he felt light-hearted and gay and began to pursue other new possible truths with vigour and enthusiasm, his ideas became more and more outrageous and presumably closer to the absurdity which tired minds confused with truth. (p.197). Through Cojo, though, Ramiro learned a lot about appearance and reality. He realised for example how deceptive appearances were in his own case: Cojo had had grounds for thinking that Ramiro had defaulted on his mission and yet inner conviction was not an essential pre-requisite for the accomplishment of a mission either by a priest or a revolutionary so Cojo's sense that Ramiro did not have an inner conviction was not necessarily a valid reason for doubting him. Appearance and reality and different ways of passing from one to the other are also the major points of interest in the evening that Ramiro spent with the gypsies at Cojo's suggestion. From an initial position of contempt Ramiro came to have an almost obsessively haunting conviction that the gypsies had unique, special powers which could be invaluable to him. After Benalup in particular he was very keen to have the help of La Zumaya:

The only thing he really wanted at that moment was to talk to the old gipsy woman and ask her the ultimate truths concerning himself. (p.233)

There was a tremendous lot of deception and pretension in the gypsies and both Ramiro and the reader find abundant grounds for scepticism with regard to them. Thus their terror of the rival gypsy band could well explain the hints La Zumaya makes that Ramiro had an evil destiny. Surely any unknown face would have provoked alarm in the gypsies on that occasion? Yet Cojo, a gypsy himself who is dismissive and contemptuous of the gypsies to their faces, is not prepared to reject everything about them and he told Ramiro,

... that La Zumaya had very strange qualities and that sometimes she really foretold the future. He did not believe in such nonsense, but he had to accept the facts sometimes without trying to understand them. (p.240)

So guided by him and the possibility of truth in the story that La Zumaya had accurately predicted the life and death of Zacarías Col de Jou, Ramiro lost some of his scepticism. The main reason perhaps was that he very much wanted to know whether there was a significant pattern to the experience of misfortune he had suffered. The suggestions and interpretations of Doña Paca and the Duke were far from clear or convincing. In default of illumination from conventional modes of perception and reasoning, he sought help from the unconventional on the fringes of normal processes of understanding.¹ Of course Ramiro did not find the illumination and certainty he sought but most significant from the point of view of our assessment of him was his will and determination for finding them.

¹In Las criaturas, sceptical and fearful as she was, Lizaveta listened attentively to the unconventional ideas of Cagliostro for, like Ramiro, conventional modes of perception and reasoning had proved inadequate to explain her past and present.

The two days that Ramiro spent with Paquita in his native village constitute a restatement and development of the lessons of Benalup, the Santa Cruz district of Seville and the evening spent with the gypsies. One of the main lessons of Benalup was how easily what in itself was innocent and peaceful -- the peasants wish to work the untilled grounds of the Duke of Medina Sidonia -- could lead to violence and evil. The episode in Ramiro's village demonstrates how Paquita's infectious terror, the villagers' animosity towards anything alien to them,¹ and its expression through a charivari, and Ramiro's memories of the violence of Benalup, very nearly combined to produce one or more violent deaths and how in a moment his life-long studious care to avoid personal participation in evil or deception could come to nothing when he lost his self-control:

Again he heard the insults of the hunting horns, and possessed by rage he loaded the gun once more, stuck it out of a window and fired, desiring now to make a killing. After the shots there was a sudden silence on that side of the house and Ramiro thought joyfully: "I got somebody." Again he loaded the gun, saying to himself: "I could gladly kill them all, even if they hanged me tomorrow." And then in a lucid moment he added: "I've got into the game. And I have entered into it in the most grotesque conditions imaginable."
(pp.252-253).

Luckily for Ramiro, he hurt no one, but as the above quotation

¹For an interesting and amusing development of this topic see El regreso de Edelmiro in Sender's Novelas del otro jueves (Mexico, 1969) pp.9-55.

makes clear it was not for want of trying.¹ Yet Ramiro knew the people of his village and he knew that there was nothing to fear from the charivari, but at the dead of night, in the isolated house of el Tomillar, in the company of the hysterical Paquita, memories of Benalup were sufficient to suppress temporarily that knowledge:

He remembered Benalup and Curro Cruz and felt an ancient fury that quickened his breathing, although he considered himself rather ridiculous for the disproportionate intensity of his reactions, since nobody thought of attacking him, much less burning him alive. (p.253)

(One could reasonably argue that Ramiro's reaction here is a further vindication of his criticisms of the results of the Graco plan which he has expressed to Cojo. The effect of Benalup on Ramiro was to increase his fear of violence and therefore to make him more likely to over-react in a violent manner to an apparent manifestation of it.) It took Ramiro a day and a half of careful thought to understand the full significance of the charivari:

"They (the villagers) know that any day they can have done to them what happened in Benalup," he was thinking. "Mean-

¹Within this novel, the killing of another human being, or - to a lesser extent - as here the intention to do so, has a symbolic significance: it symbolises an evil act. Violence is essentially evil and killing another person an example of an evil act. Ramiro's accidental killing of the apothecary signifies his first major involvement in evil. Goya's admission that he had killed and was prepared to do so again in order to be able to continue painting signified his moral capitulation and integration in a world of evil. Cojo's miscalculations in the Graco plan which led to so many deaths made him and the anarchists unworthy moral examples. Curro Cruz's killing of guards, despite his peaceful intentions, signified his succumbing to the evil of the world. Despite Sender's allegation to Peñuelas, (Conversaciones, p. 123) that he made Ramiro as hangman, unable to execute his victims as a concession to the sensibility of his readers, I would argue that Ramiro's inability to execute is extremely significant in terms of the meaning of the novel. For one thing it allies with other associated evidence to suggest that to the very last Ramiro had serious doubts about the office of hangman. For another it shows Ramiro to be fundamentally innocent in terms of the symbolic significance of killing outlined above.

while they take advantage of every opportunity to molest people from the city. The city is civilization, law, the enemy. Paquita and I are the city." (p.259) (My parenthesis).

In point of fact, did the villagers but know it, no one could be less of a threat to them than Ramiro or Paquita. Ramiro was not only sympathetic to the plight of peasants but also very concerned not to participate in ill-considered plans of help which, like the Graco plan, could be tragically counter-productive, and the conformism of Paquita extended to accepting with equanimity the scorn of people who mistreated her: she could not be a danger to anyone. But of course the villagers did not know it and indeed it was in the nature of things that they should not be properly informed. Cojo had acknowledged the insufficiency of information on which the Graco plan had been based (p.237) and, as we have seen, knowing and distinguishing appearance from reality had been recurrent problems for both him and Ramiro. The significant point is that the villagers on the basis of misinformation felt aggression for Ramiro and Paquita, and that that aggression although expressed symbolically through the charivari could well have ended in violence. Both the charivari and Ramiro's reaction to it show how easily men could be swept into a vortex of evil and violence without intending it. But can the animosity of the villagers towards Ramiro be dismissed as nothing more than the expression of fear deriving from misinformation? And can Paquita's rejection of Ramiro be dismissed as nothing more than an irrational, baseless fear? If one bears in mind the kind of questions that Ramiro took seriously in his conversation with Cojo and during the evening with the gypsies and their relation to accidents in the course of Ramiro's life, the matter is seen to be a difficult one and of importance for the

whole novel. It is easy to provide an explanation of Paquita's feelings in terms of natural phenomena. After the prostitute had left him, Ramiro recognised that, "Taking La Cañamón out of Madrid had been a stupid blunder." (p.260). She was a simple girl, had never left Madrid before and everything conspired to astonish and frighten her, from the uninhabited landscape to the presence of squirrels, pigs and goats which she had never seen before. After thoughts of the excitement of the holiday/"honeymoon", the unexpected absence of Ramiro's mother and the discovery that Ramiro was disliked in his village and that he had been in gaol, came as a great shock and disappointment. The terror engendered by the charivari - to which Ramiro himself was not immune - was the final straw and with it there welled up from the recesses of her unconscious mind a distrust of the man who attacked her conformist notion of herself as a prostitute. And it was all this, one could say, that made her feel that Ramiro represented something dangerous and unknown:

"But tell me, Ramiro; who are you that you go to jail, and wish to marry a prostitute like me? Now I understand something I could never explain. I was afraid of you and I loved you. But I thought the fear was silly. Now I see it wasn't. Leave me, Ramiro. Let me go away. Or have you brought me here to take me alive to a place you don't come back from? I have not been bad, Ramiro... Why do you want to punish me? Why did you bring me here?" (pp.255-256)

But, on the other hand, when Ramiro wrote to Paquita from Benalup he insisted that she had "a special kind of wisdom" that allowed her to understand things about him and his future that he himself could not comprehend (p.211). Is it not possible, therefore, that her rejection of Ramiro could be the expression of such an intuitive wisdom? She is certainly extremely determined in her rejection of him and furthermore

Certain of the things she says tie up with other comments on Ramiro that she could not possibly know about. Thus what she said about his being "like a monk" recalls Graco's description of him as a "cracked friar", a similar description by Cojo, his seeing his role at Benalup as that of a "Christian moralist", Juan Echenique's description of the hangman as "the only true priest" and the Duke's positive conviction that Ramiro's life had been spared during the Civil War, "... because God is reserving a great mission for you." (p.288). True, some of these comments were passed as jokes and the odd one seemed to signify little more than that Ramiro stood apart from his fellows and was morally preoccupied in the manner that might be expected of a priest. Nevertheless, their recurrence is suggestive. Suggestive too is the similarity between Paquita's perception of a "bottomless pit" within Ramiro, La Zumaya's calling him "the bogeyman of Holy Friday, the one who sold Our Lord" (p.189) and Ramiro's own periodic conviction that though his innocence could reasonably be argued, there was equal evidence for his being considered guilty:

"I am a vile man; it can be said a priori that I am, in so far as proving it is concerned..." (p.136)

The case for and against the validity of Paquita's feelings, like that for and against the validity of the peasants' animosity, La Zumaya's powers, Ramiro's link with the Vallemedianos and Prim, and free will/determinism in respect of Ramiro, can be argued interminably. The fact that it can be so, is because Sender intended it so. Sender leaves these questions open because they are integral ingredients of the very stuff of reality, the full moral and epistemological complexity of which he is seeking to convey in the novel.

The modern relevance of Ramiro's existential predicament would be lost if the author were to guide the reader through it to simple, recognisable solutions. The imposing edifice of ambivalence which is The Affable Hangman would collapse if the real difficulties of Ramiro's problems did not remain credible. Difficult as these epistemological problems are, they are a matter of grave moral urgency. The assessment of Ramiro made by the villagers led them to express aggression against him, an aggression that very nearly ended in people being killed. The assessment that Ramiro's mother made of the boy after he had run away ended in his being imprisoned and treated as a common criminal. The summary assessment that the police made of Ramiro after finding him in Graco's house - an assessment greatly elaborated by the press (p.92) - led to him being detained. If the circumstantial evidence, intuitions and feelings that led to these assessments be regarded as valid and the consequent judgment also, what followed can within limits be regarded as right and proper. But if there is any doubt about the evidence and the assessments, it must be accepted that very serious injustices may have been perpetrated.¹ Moral and epistemological problems in this novel are very closely related.

In terms of Ramiro's innermost convictions - temporarily pushed into the back of his mind by the horrors of Benalup - and in terms of what one is already tempted to call Ramiro's manifest, or partly manifest, destiny, the two days spent with

¹For a development of this theme, see R. Sender, El lugar de un hombre (Barcelona 1968) a novel, which among other things, shows how individuals, groups and communities can miss the simple truth and perpetrate appalling injustices.

Paquita in his native village were a fundamental mistake. He had gone there, following Cojo's advice, seeking escape¹ from his immediate memories of Benalup. He sought the kind of peace that the Santa Cruz district of Seville had initially seemed able to provide. He wanted to be "forgotten by the rest of the world" (p.242) and isolated from it. But Benalup, its evil and violence, followed him from Madrid. It was present, at least potentially, in the villagers' fear of what was alien in the charivari and in his own reaction to it. Furthermore, in seeking temporary happiness with Paquita, Ramiro was being unfaithful to his own frequently expressed conviction that his true role in life had nothing to do with happiness but lay in some kind of self-sacrifice. A kind of self-sacrifice which on one occasion (p.171) he had specifically related to a sacrifice of happiness with Paquita. It is certainly true that Paquita was a very special kind of woman and his intuition, expressed in his letter to her from Benalup that she might occupy a place in his future did indeed seem in accordance with his general inclination to self-sacrifice.

The prostitute was a sacrificial victim to social hypocrisy in the same way that the hangman was and in the same way that Ramiro wanted himself to be. But the crucial point was that Ramiro conceived of a relationship with Paquita, in that letter, because since she was a prostitute with her "no illusions were possible" (p.210). The two days they spent together in his village were based on illusions. Illusions of possible happiness and escape. That this is so made abundantly clear in the fact that with her, in spite of his better judgment, very

¹See Crónica, Vol.II, particularly La onza de oro, which shows how Pepe Garcés sought an escape in his grandfather's village.

briefly Ramiro got into the game: he lost his control and wanted to kill. In his letter to Lydia, Ramiro had recognised the circumstances under which he might get into the game:

I have not entered yet. Will I some day? With whom? With a woman? With a friend? In any case it will be neither woman nor friend, but the illusion of friend or woman. (p.209) (My italics)

These were the circumstances he got into the game with Paquita. At the time of the charivari Ramiro was more profoundly involved, in an emotional sense, with Paquita than he realised. Because of this involvement he could be affected by her terror to the extent of confusing a harmless expression of animosity with a real and immediate, physical danger. Ramiro's firing the shotgun with the intention of killing someone indicated how he had strayed from his own convictions. (In a very similar way, Urbaleta's daughter sought to avoid her voluntary association with Ramiro as hangman. Throughout her life she had protested against the accident of birth that had made her the daughter of a hangman. When Ramiro paid attention to her she suggested they should flee to some foreign country. But like Ramiro after he had wandered round the Santa Cruz district of Seville, and after Paquita had left him in the village, Federica Blanca came to accept that there was no escape from evil - in her case it took the form of an association with the hangman - and she resigned herself to her role as daughter, wife and future mother of executioners.) There was no true quietistic acceptance of evil and man's impotence in the face of evil either in Ramiro's initial thoughts in Seville or in his plan to go to his village with Paquita. They both represented mistakes but mistakes from which he could learn.

The departure of Paquita left Ramiro without any distraction

or object in life. The temporary urgency and direction produced by the dream with Lydia had been destroyed by the events of Benalup. The possibilities of escape from the fatality of evil and violence had been finally denied by the charivari and Ramiro's thoughts in Seville. Ramiro reverted to his fundamental pessimistic passivity.¹ By this stage, the things that had tempted Ramiro away from this position - the dream, the hope for escape, the Graco plan, anger at the charivari - seem of minor and temporary importance. In general, Ramiro's life experiences appear to have confirmed a part conscious, part unconscious attitude to the world first manifest after the apothecary's death. It was natural that a certain aimlessness should again characterise his actions - he stayed on in the village because he could not think of anything else to do - and that his thoughts should fix again on the one man, Miguel de Molinos, who offered a philosophy appropriate to Ramiro's feelings and confictions:

He often thought the greatness of the consciously abject man. The superiority of Miguel de Molinos. (p.262)
 ...he felt utterly immersed in the passive non-resistance advised by Miguel de Molinos. (p.263)

He pondered a lot on his recent experiences and his general position. His was very different from that of the anarchists, he reflected before the ruins of the castle of his ancestors, Rocafría. He imagined that Cojo, Chino and Graco were perhaps dead:

"Are you perhaps all together now?" (p.263)

¹Ramiro and Lizaveta are in a sense complementary figures, paralleled within their different sexual roles. Ramiro is supremely concerned to avoid causing evil and suffering or benefiting from the evil and suffering caused by others. Lizaveta is supremely concerned to avoid being the victim of further evil and suffering.

Their death being the inevitable price of commitment, as he had seen at Benalup:

"Our lives are the rivers - flowing into the sea which is death." If he did not enter the river the sea could not claim him." (p.211)

Ramiro, by contrast, was alive, free and uncommitted. But, he now recognised, that freedom was limited by important constraints:

"In my freedom... I am accompanied by the dead of Benalup and the memory of La Cañamón, whom I allowed to escape, thinking that it would be better for her to go on living honorably, as she said, than to bind her to the fate of the Vallemedianos." (p.265)

He might not have a commitment like the anarchists' but neither could he be unconcerned. Indeed, in his recognition of the importance of Benalup to him there was something very much akin to the notion of social responsibility about which the anarchists had been insistent. Quietism could not be an easy option for it also had to contain his moral and social concern. This was again the lesson of the Santa Cruz district of Seville and his own village, where he had learnt that it was idle to try to forget his relation to his fellow men, wherever he might be, or to think that he could stand in isolation from them. The diluted, passive quietism he thought to express then had been no more than a silly evasion. The other important conclusion that Ramiro came to in this pause for thought after Paquita's departure, was that there might be some significance in the suggested link between him and the Vallemedianos. The evidence at the castle of Rocafría, as might be expected, was ambiguous. On three occasions the ruined castle re-echoed Ramiro's forceful affirmation of his own presence and furthermore, he, "...felt something familiar..." (p.264), in the stones of the castle and thought that "men like him had organised their

life there" (p.264). (The fact that among those men there had been generations of hangmen is of greater significance to the reader than it was to Ramiro, for at that particular time he had no intention of becoming a hangman.) But, on the other hand, Ramiro's final challenging questions shouted at the castle went unanswered:

"Who tells me, Ramiro Vallemadiano, what I can do? I who want to live without entering life, who want to go living on the margin?" There was no echo. (p265)

A clear echo of Ramiro's question would have given support to his implicit affirmation of his total freedom. A confused echo could have been interpreted as a challenge to his implied freedom. But on this most crucial of all questions the castle had nothing to say. Ramiro and the reader do not know whether to interpret the silence as signifying that whatever link might have existed between Ramiro and the castle of his ancestors has been broken - the castle has nothing to say in answer to a question that it does not understand -, that with regard to crucial, existential questions of this kind each man stands alone and must decide for himself, or that the castle and Ramiro's ancestors want him to continue with the illusory notion of his own freedom. In respect of this last interpretation, it is interesting to note that Ramiro did become a hangman like his ancestors, and he did so convinced that he was exercising freedom of choice.

During the Civil War and because of it, Ramiro takes the last important step to becoming a hangman. The war serves to confirm and reinforce all the major lessons of his previous experiences. If Benalup showed how men with natural right on their side and with no intentions of harming anyone could

be drawn into a vortex of violence in which they killed and were killed, the Civil War gave innumerable examples of the murder of totally innocent men:

In the village they had killed the doctor, the new apothecary, two engineers who had come to study a waterfall, and some forty persons suspected of having voted for the republic in recent years. (pp.273-274)

If the charivari had shown how peasant animosity based on fear and scanty information could clearly lead to violence, the Civil War gave countless examples of cruelty and death based on suspicion and less than suspicion. Ramiro found himself in mortal danger simply because he did not attend Church. But the dangers that Ramiro and everyone else faced were not the expression of the mentality of fearful, ignorant peasants. They were dangers fostered and endorsed by the official, Nationalist authorities:

...the wireless was repeating every day: "Let everyone stay where he is. Whoever changes his residence and location without reason does so because he has something to hide or fear from his neighbors." (p.268)

The normal processes of law which before the war might have checked or restrained partiality or prejudice were dispensed with altogether. Thus, when Ramiro enquired about the trial and sentence of five men about to be shot,

A young barber-shop employee who had sewed lieutenant's insignia on his sleeve¹ said: "History has tried them." Another who wore no insignia repeated like a madman: "God has judged them".² (p.269)

¹One recalls José Moreno Villa's reflections on the Civil War as expressed in his poem, Nos trajeron las ondas:

¿Quién hizo capitán
al mozo tabernero y juez al hortelano?
¿Quién hizo embajador al pobre analfabeto
y conductor de almas a quien no se conduce?

²It is interesting to note that Franco, according to his own declaration, as Head of State is only answerable "ante Dios y la Historia."

But the absence of true enquiry could have comic and absurd results as well as tragic ones: Ramiro's wound, with minimal help from the dolts responsible, converted him into a military hero;¹ he was cited as an example of heroism and made the

¹Sender, ever attentive to the convolutions of his own argument and of the very stuff of reality, is making considerably more than a comic point here. For one thing, Ramiro's acceptance here as a military hero of the Nationalists is an anticipation of his public acclamation as hangman at the end of the novel. For another, the detail shows how a kind of truth could emerge out of prejudice, circumstantial evidence, partiality and false means of arriving at the truth. Ramiro was indeed a kind of hero in the Civil War - a clear-sighted moral hero - who alone shunned violence and repudiated it. In the same way that we are allowed to see that perhaps the people of his native village and Paquita, in their different ways, through misinformation and irrational fear, accurately perceived something of the horror of the hangman in Ramiro, so here perhaps in spite of themselves and their bigotry the Nationalists also expressed something true about Ramiro.

Sender has always been critical of the kind of heroism and nationalism that was displayed by the Nationalists during the Civil War and of which Ramiro's acclaim was an ironic example. La aventura equinocial de Lope de Aguirre (New York, 1964), subtitled una antiepopeya certainly expressed such criticism. There was nothing glorious about that particular conquistador. And for what the conquistadores, "forgers of our glorious nationality" (AH. p.272) destroyed in Latin America, see Sender's América antes de Colón from which the following account of the Indians' social organisation is taken:

El padre trabajó según su edad y aptitud directamente protegido por el Estado, que cuidaba de su bienestar. Al llegar los hijos a la edad determinada tomaban la esposa que el ayllu les daba y el mismo ayllu les construía una casa y les daba las tierras de cultivo necesarias para su mantenimiento o al trabajo industrial adecuado. A medida que iban naciendo hijos y surgiendo nuevas necesidades la comunidad les aumentaba las tierras de labor o la retribución en especie en alimentos y vestidos... No existían la propiedad privada y la tierra pertenecía a la comunidad... los individuos ya viejos y los inútiles por defecto físico o por otra causa los mantenía el Estado... El ocio estaba desterrado... Todos trabajaban, el obrero industrial recibía la materia prima del Estado y la jornada de trabajo no era fatigosa por lo cual nadie tenía del trabajo la idea agobiadora tan frecuente en los países civilizados. (p.43)

Emen hetan, similarly, is to a large extent an attack upon patriotic interpretations of the moral and religious history of Spain. An attack upon nationalistic interpretations of South American history and a muted defence of Spain's role there in the late eighteenth century, is made in Túpac Amaru (Barcelona,

object of patriotic speeches. If both the picture of the auto-da-fe in the Prado and the high ecclesiastic in his dream with Lydia had suggested there was a crucial link between the Church and violence (of an institutionalised kind), a scene Ramiro witnessed early in the war established an important link between the Church and the persecutors of Jesus Christ:¹

People saluted raising their arm in the Roman manner. In front of the Cathedral one day he saw several bishops and the cardinal of the archdiocese giving this salute, dressed in their pontifical robes. Ramiro was ^{also} thinking: "That is the salute the pagans gave before the Christian era. The salute given by the centurion who wounded Christ. How can this be?" (p.268)

The frightening disproportion between the aspirations of the peasants of Benalup and the violence of the repression had led Ramiro to pessimistic conclusions on the fatality of evil which, at the time, despite Banalup, seemed extreme and more than the facts justified:

"When one is born...he finds a natural law already made. If we are virtuous and gentle and want to be faithful to that natural law, they will crucify us as they crucified Jesus. If we are not virtuous or gentle but want to be just, we will end up like Curro Cruz. Which seems that in one way or another, if we are faithful to that natural law, they will kill us." (pp.239-240).

But in the course of the Civil War his conclusions seem perfectly

1973) which, as the author explains, was written with the object of refuting "nuestro idealismo de colonizadores" (p.10). The latter would appear to be enshrined in the myth that the desperate plight of the Indians was the fault of Spain and unjust laws rather than a corrupt administration for which the criollos had a large measure of responsibility.

¹In Parábola de Jesús y el inquisidor, R. Sender, Las gallinas de Cervantes y otras narraciones parabólicas (Mexico, 1967), pp.87-117, drawing on The Brothers Karamazov by Dostoyewsky, Sender develops the point. Torquemada, the Inquisitor General, after a long interrogatory conversation with Jesus Christ announces that the prisoner was a dangerous revolutionary and it was in the interests of the Church that he be put to death.

justified. Natural justice had less chance of success than ever; the very ones who had infringed natural justice at Benalup now arrogated themselves the right of rebellion, calling themselves "phalanxes of redeemers":

Ramiro finally understood that it was a question of insurrection in all the country, but those who had risen in rebellion were not Cojo or the other revolutionaries, but those with power, the same ones who had killed Curro Cruz in Benalup.¹ (pp.267-268)

One is tempted to draw a parallel between the world and the Civil War and that of Macbeth: a world of inverted values and equivocation. But such a parallel would confuse rather than illuminate, for although events were such that Ramiro declared "the whole world mad" and that "words had lost their ordinary meanings" (p.275), nevertheless, the madness was nothing more than an intensified version of what Ramiro had been experiencing and describing since his childhood. The Civil War was the vindication of everything that Ramiro had said. If ever during the novel the reader had felt that Ramiro was mistaken in his assessment of the world and the place of evil in it and that the future hangman exaggerated the need for reflection to avoid man's propensity for evil and violence, the Civil War section of the novel will surely disabuse him. Ramiro is the only one who understands anything of what is happening. He is the only one whose hands are clean. The true value of his independence of mind and action, his search for truth and his

¹A historical clarification is desirable here. At the time of Benalup (Casas Viejas) the Minister of the Interior was Santiago Casares Quiroga and the Prime Minister Manuel Azaña. At the outbreak of the Civil War, the period in question here, Casares Quiroga was Prime Minister and Azaña was President. So if one adopts a conventional point of view the Nationalist insurrection was against the government of the men who had ministerial responsibility for the repressions of the uprising of Casas Viejas. Ramiro is of course making a more general point against all authority and officially sanctioned violence and repression to the effect that the victims are always the victims.

refusal to involve himself in anything he did not agree with or understand, is seen in the war situation. What happens in the war and what Ramiro does in it are almost a complete vindication of his ethics and his assessment of reality. Ramiro's attitude to the Civil War was compounded of a concern for natural justice and an overwhelming sense of man's impotence in the face of evil and violence that threatened to destroy any vestige of natural justice. Thus it was that he, within the Nationalist zone, was insistent and vigorous in his unspoken criticisms of the Nationalist insurrection and the prostitution of the Church's true moral role. But he felt nothing could be done. Bewildered by the scale of the injustice and violence around him he remained a passive, impotent spectator:

The victims of Benalup were multiplied by thousands every day. Ramiro had reached a state of total apathy towards good and evil, hatred and love, life and death. He was not afraid. Neither did he hope. And Ramiro stayed quiet with his bandaged arm and the sensation of being on the margin. (p.271)

But even if there was no hope of actively combating evil and violence, he did not feel happy in complete passivity. Whether it was a resurgence of that sympathy for all victims he had felt when, as a boy, he was first a victim himself, a vestige of the respect he had felt for the anarchist insistence on social responsibility, or whether he had reconsidered again the vanity of his attempts to remain morally isolated, is not clear, but he had a growing sense of the inadequacy of some features of his existence on the margin of life. One of the features that Ramiro had found attractive about quietism - of which his passivity was in part an expression - was the use God might make of his passivity. There was no apparent evidence of this happening during the war and Ramiro felt ill

at ease and threatened at the thought of victims:

In those days the nationalists had a memorable victory. Ramiro, seeing around him the elation of the people, felt cheated. A nationalist victory hurt him. Soon afterwards the victory was for the republicans, who took Teruel. Ramiro regretted that also. It seemed to him that any reason for rejoicing on either side took something from him. From him? Ramiro knew that he had nothing and wanted to have nothing in his life, but they were robbing him of the possibilities or at least making it difficult for him to continue outside the river of life. The nationalists had taken Castellón? Everyone was delirious with enthusiasm. The republicans had taken Teruel? The sadness of the others attempted to coerce him, but he was completely indifferent. (pp.276-277).

Three further things, in particular, conspired to make him feel uneasy and in the end to modify his position on the margin in an important way. The first was the account of how Pope Clement XIV succeeded in poisoning himself with an antidote he took against the poisons of the Jesuits:

He was wondering if his own efforts to stay on the margin might not in the end be like an antidote, also poisonous. (p.276).

The second was a chance incident by which, in an immediate and forceful way, he was made to identify with the victims of an execution he had been required to take part in. From the first he saw in the faces of the men to be executed characteristics similar to those he had displayed before and during the war:

The prisoners looked indifferent, like men without hope. In their faces there was neither hate nor love, neither faith nor despair. Only a kind of frozen curiosity about what was to happen to them. Ramiro felt he was in the same moral situation as they. (p.269)

The bullet that killed one of the prisoners and left Ramiro a bleeding victim too, strongly reinforced the identification. Suddenly he became aware of the crime that had been committed:

Ramiro stayed motionless in the darkness and felt the warm blood oozing between his fingers. "Criminals," he whispered to himself. "Common murderers." But a new reflection left him confused. "I didn't think they were real criminals or murderers until this instant, until I saw myself wounded." (pp.269-270)

Suddenly Ramiro saw his indifference and lack of involvement as a defect. The barrier that had separated Ramiro from total identification with the victims was broken. It began to appear to him that there was something culpable and negligent in his former passivity. Quite what to do with his new awareness Ramiro did not know, but an important change in his attitude had occurred, (The incident has an extra, important significance for the reader. In a curious way, this execution anticipates what will happen when Ramiro becomes hangman. Though many participate in this execution, Ramiro is the only one who afterwards bears the stigma of the execution. He is the only one with bloody hands. When Ramiro is hangman, many people will participate in state executions which take place by and for the state, yet only the executioner himself will be regarded with opprobrium and thought to have bloody hands. Ramiro's bloody hands caused fear and dismay to the militiamen - one of them observed, "...that act compromised them all..." (p.270) -, since it bore testimony to their ineptitude. Similarly, as Sender implicitly affirms in The Affable Hangman, the bloody hands of a state executioner constitute an indictment of that state and of all the citizens in it. As when Ramiro becomes hangman, he does not kill anyone during the executions in the Civil War and is identifiable more with his victims than with the people who organised the executions. It is unnecessary perhaps to add that this incident and the other execution Ramiro was compelled to witness provided more examples of those suggestive accidents which allow the possibility of his life being interpreted as following a predetermined path leading to his becoming hangman.) The pattern of events and the sequence of Ramiro's feelings at the second execution follow

those of the first. From the outset Ramiro felt a distant identification with the prisoners who were to be executed. The reader has the impression that somehow Ramiro's concern had become displaced from its true focus either by some kind of psychological defence mechanism or the conviction that whatever his concern nothing could be done:

The twenty-seven men were locked up in the prison cell in the basement of the town-hall. Ramiro had been there years before because of the suspicions of the villagers concerning the apothecary's death. Recalling the dimensions of the cell Ramiro said to himself: "How is it possible for twenty-seven men to be in it! There's not even room for them to stand up." (p.275)

What worried Ramiro was not the possibility of their being killed, but their being obliged - the twenty-seven of them - to live in such a small cell. (p.277)

During the journey from the jail to the place of execution the sentimental gap between Ramiro and the prisoners narrowed: he recognised childhood friends among them, but like the prisoners dismissed the significance of such thoughts:

"Those three who played with me as children did not recognise me. None is in condition to recognize a childhood friend because neither childhood nor friendship has any meaning for them now. All right. Nothing matters to me either." (p.279)

But the particular horror and inhuman cruelty of the execution, like the feel of his own blood at the first, completely destroyed any ideological barrier or sentimental inhibition that separated him from the reality of what was happening. If after the first execution he was able to lapse again into indifference he would not be able to do so again after the second:

On his way back Ramiro was thinking: "This is more cruel than what they did to Curro Cruz and the peasants of Benalup. And the Duke, the priest of my town, the mayor, the judges know it or take it for granted. Everyone knows it and no one does anything about it." ...It suddenly occurred to Ramiro that it had been a good thing for him to make himself responsible for all that. He

wanted to be even more so. The word responsibility rang out inside him in an urgent way and with tremendous force. It was an obsession. (pp.280-281)

"I would like to make myself responsible for all the crimes in the world," he muttered to himself. (p.284)

He was not clear how he could assume the responsibility he sought, yet there could be no doubt that any temporary failure to do so was a question of circumstances rather than inclination. The last vestiges of evasion had been swept away and Ramiro's recognition of inescapable evil and his disposition to sacrifice his own personal interests for a greater moral purpose were again established as the twin pillars on which his life would be built. It was the villagers' own evasion of responsibility - which mirrored that of the Duke and the village authorities - that finally decided Ramiro. After the execution they refused to recognise they had had any part in it at all and projected the responsibility onto the one person who had always been an alien element in their midst, Ramiro:

In the town everyone was beginning to believe that the first and perhaps only one responsible for the deaths of those men was Ramiro... (p.284)

(Like the detail of the bloody hands in the first execution, the attitude of the villagers after the second has special significance for the reader: again we have a foretaste of what will happen to Ramiro as hangman. He also will be singled out for blame, though the whole of society gives tacit or active support for state executions and though Ramiro never kills anyone.)

There was nothing in post-Civil War Spain to make Ramiro give up his search for a way of assuming responsibility for inescapable evil. Natural justice was as far away as ever for,

The workers had a sullen, evasive look, and most of them were poorly dressed. (p.288)

Indeed the evil and injustice of the war lived on for the most militant perpetrators of them were those who prospered most (pp.283-284). But Ramiro was concerned not only to avoid drawing "moral and material benefit" from the evil of the world as manifest during the war, but to assume responsibility for it. He was appalled how everyone, and the Duke in particular, were able to ignore and forget everything that had happened:

"But how can he be tranquil with all that has just happened in Spain?" (p.285)

Ramiro's accidental encounter with an advertisement for a public executioner provides him with an outlet for his lack of tranquility and his need for responsibility. Momentous as the decision would be, Ramiro required little more than a couple of days to make it, such was his ideological and sentimental inclination. And he had no regrets afterwards.

"I am not mad. The office of hangman will make me unhappy, but I will sacrifice happiness to truth. The entire social order rests on the hangman, yet no one wants the responsibility of being hangman." (p.286)

The last piece of the jigsaw puzzle of his life seems to have been put into place and the final pattern and lines of his life made clear. The isolation he had known throughout his life which had pre-existed his birth in his mother's rejection of his illegitimacy was finally and irrevocably confirmed.

He was to find it more evident still in Urbaleta and his family who seemed to know no one other than hangmen (p.297).

The unassisted ringing of church bells in his village (p.287) announced the quietistic moral annihilation that he had always favoured (p.286) and now looked for in his office of hangman.

It was further confirmed in the omission of all courtesy titles in official communications to him from the prison authorities and in the way the retiring hangman always referred to himself

as "one". The first signs of the atavistic hardness so apparent on the face of the retiring hangman were already upon him (pp. 289-290) before he performed any execution. He kept on thinking about Rocafría, which he had earlier associated with generations of Vallemediano hangmen:

He saw the castle¹ of Rocafría. Sometimes he saw it outside himself, sometimes within. (p.303)

The job of hangman seemed able to satisfy the fundamental moral, psychological and ideological needs which Ramiro's experiences had implanted in him: he would not draw benefit from officially sanctioned state executions carried out by others; he would bear personal responsibility for official acts of violence carried out in his name; and as the acknowledged instrument of state violence, as such considered guilty for it, carrying out the violence for others and not for himself, in a very special sense while not evading the violence of society he would no longer be a member of it.² In Ramiro's own terms:

"I have not entered into life... I have not got into the game, but into the mystery of the last secret truth governing it." (p.291)

But while seeming to fulfil Ramiro's deepest needs, the office of hangman also seemed to correspond to the horrifying uniqueness that so many people and events had suggested was Ramiro's and to which it is not necessary to refer again here.

¹This seems to be reminiscent of the terminology of Molinosism:

The expression quietism referred, then, to an atony of the will which isolated man until it enclosed him in the castle of his own misery. (p.135)

²Federico Salla in La esfera supplied an interesting piece of information concerning the executioner in Spain which, whether accurate or not, is illuminating with regard to Ramiro's interpretation of his office:

"Después de la ejecución al verdugo lo detiene la policía y lo encarcela por haber matado a un hombre. Sigue preso unos instantes hasta que demuestra documentalmente, a través de un pequeño proceso, que lo ha hecho al servicio

The crucial question of Ramiro's life and decision to become hangman being predetermined is thus raised again, and this time with an important new element. I repeat my assertion that Sender leaves deliberately open the question of La Zumaya's veiled predictions, the association of Ramiro with his ancestors etc. But now Sender has added a further complication. If the reader wants to opt for a determinist interpretation he has to face the fact that Ramiro as a mere instrument of destiny reaches conclusions with regard to the fatality of evil that correspond exactly to the fatality of evil as manifest in his life. On the other hand, if the reader seeks to see Ramiro as an entirely free agent he has to explain why the office of hangman corresponds so exactly to the kind of horror people had always predicted for him. If one likes one can pursue, with some justification, the determinist interpretation in a slightly different form and see Ramiro as warped and misguided by a series of unrepresentative and atypical unfortunate circumstances, starting with his illegitimacy and his mother's rejection of him, which lead him to draw conclusions which do not accurately reflect reality at all. He was an unfortunate victim of social and political accidents which had conspired to destroy him.¹ But of course this interpretation raises the same objections as the other determinist one: how is it that such a warped, predetermined protagonist perceives the truth about himself?

de los intereses superiores de la sociedad representada por la ley. (p.308)

For a short period the state considers the executioner a murderer and like any prisoner he is therefore deprived of his civil rights - e.g. to vote - which as a member of society he would normally enjoy. Temporarily, the hangman is not a member of society.

¹Pepe Garcés can be interpreted similarly. His psychology can also be seen as the product of the cruelty he received as a small boy at the hands of his father, see Crónica, Vol.III, p.561.

If the concluding chapters of the novel offer no clear answers to the question of predeterminism in Ramiro's life, they offer none either to the question of the validity of his decision to become hangman. Of Ramiro's selflessness, moral integrity and industry in applying himself to his existential problems, assuming he is a free agent, there can be no doubt at any point in the novel, yet an insistent doubt does remain as to his evaluation of the office of hangman and the rightness of his decision to become one. The theological justification, so to speak, of Ramiro's taking on the office of hangman was based on the Molinosistic assumption that God might use the passivity and personal moral annihilation of the quietist for his divine purposes. But Ramiro could never know and had never known with any certainty that God would intervene (p.135). Quietism required the voluntary acceptance of chaos out of which something might emerge. But the repudiated Lydia had fixed on the chaos of the dream in her apartment rather than anything positive which might have grown out of it (p.177) and there was every indication from what Urbaleta had said about his own past and the similarity that Ramiro saw in their two faces (p.290) - that after Ramiro would become hangman, Lydia and limited, sensual women like her, would be attracted by the chaos in him. The fear was that nothing might develop out of that chaos. Disturbing too was the enthusiastic support that the Duke felt able to give to Ramiro's becoming hangman (p.313). The ending of the novel should not be considered realistically. Symbolically it confirms what Ramiro had always maintained about society's being dependent on the hangman. The final procession is the public recognition of that dependence. It is probably wrong to assume that somehow, miraculously, society's hypocrisy

with regard to the hangman was converted into gratitude. The ending is still disturbing though: the ceremony does bring home the dependence of a repressive society on the hangman and allows the reader to entertain the thought that despite Ramiro's determination to have no truck with evil he was in fact shoring up a system of violence and evil. If no one was prepared to take on the office of hangman, at worst society would have to rethink its system of repression and at best much of the repression might disappear. Furthermore, the wealth that Ramiro enjoyed no sooner had he become hangman (pp.297-298) inevitably makes one begin to doubt his assertion that he was really not a member of the society which, in his dream at Benalup, responded to the burning hut of Curro Cruz and his companions by setting up money exchanges. And finally if Ramiro was so utterly persuaded of the moral rectitude of the hangman how is it that in the twenty years he had been executioner before meeting Juan Echenique he had never succeeded in executing anyone? Does this not suggest a substantial doubt which pursued him right to the end? -- On the other hand, what alternatives were open to Ramiro within a society of evils and violence? He is surely right to regard as culpable and immoral the attitude of the Duke and so many others who acted as though the war had never taken place and that evil and violence did not exist, people whose tranquility and material prosperity relied on a system of repression.... If Ramiro had left the country could he be sure that he would not find himself dependent on a more repressive system than that of post-Civil War Spain? If he had stayed in Spain as a rebel, could he be sure that he would not occasion more violence and injustice than currently obtained in his country? The reader cannot be happy with

Ramiro's choice of a profession but neither can he doubt the abnegation or the moral integrity Ramiro exercised in choosing, and it is difficult to think of an alternative. Since a moral or ideological condemnation of Ramiro proves virtually impossible the burden of criticism must fall on the society and the reality that forced the choice upon Ramiro. One reaches very much the same conclusion if one regards Ramiro as predetermined. The question as to whether or not that reality and society were susceptible to significant change, of course, remains open: Ramiro was convinced that they were not, but Ramiro was a hangman and - to the last - a self-doubting hangman.

On a first level of interest, The Affable Hangman has a lot to offer the general reader as a historical and social document describing Spain of the 1920s and 1930s, including observations on the Spanish Civil War and an allusion¹ to post-Civil War Spain. Ramiro's life brings him into contact with the whole gamut of society from landless peasants, prisoners, poor workers and rebels against society, on the one hand, to landed aristocrats, Church dignitaries and the idle rich, on the other. We find him in small villages, provincial capitals and Madrid. He goes to a brothel, works for a circus and spends a short time in prison. He knows and experiences the ideological and social as well as the economic divisions of Spain. He knows Spain in peace and war. And through Ramiro a number of important observations on the nature of prejudice and evil in their concrete manifestations are made. A passionate concern for morality and justice informs Ramiro's perspective on society and reality in general and there emerge

¹See above p.25 and footnote (2).

both strong criticisms of the instruments of injustice and repression within society and an impassioned plea to those living in a society that sanctions capital punishment to face their moral and social responsibilities¹. But this represents no more than the bare bones of the novel which centers on the nature of reality and evil, the difficulties of understanding them, and how a man might live with them.

The Affable Hangman is an extremely ambiguous, ironical and open work. The main character has a lot to commend him in terms of intelligence and moral integrity, but fundamental questions as to the rightness of the most important decision of his life and whether or not he has free will are left unresolved. At the end of the novel, Ramiro Vallemediano remains as elusive and unreliable, from the point of view of the reader's comfort and potential complacency, as were Spic, Cagliostro, Pepe Garcés and Federico Saila. Sender offers the reader not solutions or answers, but problems, questions and doubts. He forces these upon the reader by a very careful manipulation of the details and structure of the novel. Thus there is ample material to tempt the reader into regarding Ramiro as predetermined, or to say that his decision to become a hangman is fundamentally moral and right, but there is also ample and persuasive evidence for the reader to conclude Ramiro is an ill-advised, mistaken free agent. And similarly the reader is both tempted to identify with the affable main character through the vehicle of the quasi-first person narration and

¹Of The Affable Hangman, Sender said to Peñuelas in Conversaciones,

...tres meses después de publicarse el libro en Inglaterra aprobaron en la Cámara de los Comunes la supresión de la pena de muerte. Y aquí, en Estados Unidos, en varios estados se ha suprimido, y supongo que en el futuro se abolirá completamente. Pero, claro, la novela ha sido sino un elemento más de evidencia. (p.122)

prevented from doing so by the visible blood on his hands.

The novel is particularly interesting from the point of view of Sender's own life. The painful struggle within Ramiro leading to his rejection of active, anarchist commitment is one that to some degree has occupied Sender since the early 1930s¹. The question raised through and by Ramiro as to the possibility of reality not being susceptible to change through the efforts of men alone, was one that arose for Sender out of the Spanish Civil War. It was one that had never arisen before as far as one can gather from his pre-Civil War novels and other writings. Doubts as to his own behaviour during the Civil War² and as to the wisdom and morality of the decision he made in late 1938 to abandon Spain and go into exile, made largely for family reasons³, appear to have had a major part in the inspiration of The Affable Hangman. Ramiro Vallemediano could be said to represent what Unamuno would have called an ex-future self of Sender's, that is to say the person he might have become had he made a different choice and remained in Spain without compromising himself. In the same way, Pepe Garcés in Crónica represents the ex-future self who remained faithful to the ideals of Sender's childhood and early youth. The two novels are significant in respect of Sender's post-Civil War mentality not only in the fact that they re-open and reconsider Sender's own past life, presenting alternatives to the ones he followed, but also in the fact that those alternatives themselves are presented

¹See above, p.62 and footnote.

²See Peñuelas Conversaciones, pp.121-123.

³See above, p.12

ambivalently. Ramiro Vallemediño and Pepe Gracés can, at one and the same time, be commended and praised or rejected and condemned.

CHAPTER III

Emen hetan

There has been some progress in recent criticism of Emen hetan. Josefa Rivas¹ and Charles Frederick Olstad² had difficulty in relating this novel to other works written by Sender. Francisco Carrasquer³ has now pointed out its obvious links with Las criaturas, of which it is in part an embryonic version, and with other novels by the same author. However, no-one has yet done justice to the irony of Emen hetan and no attempt has been made to relate the psychology of the characters to the action. I would suggest that there is an important link between satanism, as seen in this book, and the psychology of the characters who attend the satanic ceremony the book describes. The linking of the ideas and psychology of a character is important in Sender, and together with the essential ambiguity of Emen hetan qualify it as typical of Sender's post-Civil War work.

Emen hetan is mainly composed of dialogue, interspersed with short descriptive passages of the satanists' sabbath which provides the setting of the novel. The narrator barely intrudes into the novel at all in the sense of his making explicit comments on the characters or the sabbath. If the narrator has any judgments or evaluations to make - and he does - the reader must look for them in what the characters say, how they react one with another, and in the details of the action.

¹Op.cit.

... Emen hetan es una obra desconcertante y que choca^m a cualquier lector, incluso al familiarizado con la obra de Sender. (p.173).

²See above. p.8.

³Op.cit., pp.243-246.

The first thing one notices about the ritual of the sabbath as described in Emen hetan is how closely related it is to Christian - in particular, Roman Catholic - ritual.

Most of the sabbath is composed of inverted mimicry of the ritual of the Church: the Devil is present at the service; communion takes place with the body and blood of a child said to have been fathered by the Devil in person; diabolically reconsecrated black hosts replace the white ones of the

Christian ceremony; and black candles white candles; the

faithful are required to confess to acts of virtue. Supporting

the ritual of the sabbath was a demonology closely paralleling

Christian theology: there was a satanic trinity and the same

mystery attached to the nature of the Devil as to the line

between humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. The world

itself testifies to the power and influence not of God but Satan:

"¿Qué sucede en la tierra sino todo lo contrario de lo que pregonan los de Roma? Todo el mundo - incluso el Papa - hace lo que quiere y no lo que aconseja a los demás. Pregona el bien y hacen el mal. ...Ah, la hipocresía humana." (pp.61-62)

Furthermore, Spain was pre-eminent among nations in its devotion to the devil:

"No hay tierra como la nuestra. Pobre, calcárea, tierra de sal de lagartos y de aljes. La tierra ideal para verter la sangre, para llorar viéndola vertida y para cantar combinando el llanto y la blasfemia...Desde niño me hablaron en Spanna antes del Diablo que de Dios...Las uñas que me cortaban se las llevaba el diablo, el diente caído también." (pp.55-56)

There is an inherent silliness in satanic ritual, in demonology

and in this interpretation of Spain. Clearly the satanic

ritual was derivative and dependent on Catholic ritual, demonology

was derivative and dependent on Catholic theology, and the

diabolical interpretation of Spain no more than a retort to

certain traditional interpretations of Spain. The point is

an obvious one and very important for immediately the validity

of the views and the ritual are called into question.

The ritual of the sabbath is seen to be comic in innumerable small details. The arrival of the Devil is known when people hear, "...un aullido largo ^{como} el de un perro atrapado por una carreta..." (p.34) At one stage the litany gets out of hand as one old lady is carried away by her enthusiasm for Numa Pompilius:

...otra (anciana) ...gritó:

- Numa Pompilio!...

El caballero respondió en voz muy alta:

-Cámena egregio.

-Numa Pompilio! - repitió la misma mujer como si se hubiera enfadado.

-Jano, la salía.

Satisfecha la anciana de ver que le contestaban alzaba la voz todavía como si quisiera insultar a sus mayores enemigos:

-¡Numa Pompilio!

...

-¡Numa Pompilio! - gritó con un acento desgarrado.

...

-¡¡¡Numa Pompilio!!! - volvió a gritar con toda la fuerza de sus pulmones.

-¡Rómulo Flavio! Cálmate, hija. Rómulo Flavio!

Volvió a bailar la anciana con una expresión de disgusto... (pp.96-97).

The urine of a virgin had special properties which made it invaluable at the sabbath. It was an impatient and hopeful Spic, chief necromancer and exponent of satanism at the sabbath, who waited for another satanist, Agueda, to emerge from behind some bushes where she was collecting some of Marieta's "líquido renal" in a chalice.

Y Agueda tardaba. Buen indicio. (p.32)

The eight-year-old Marieta provides the author with a splendid instrument for criticism and ridicule of the sabbath and of the satanists, in particular Spic. She has no axe to grind and is both spontaneous and uninhibited in her reactions to what she sees and hears. When asked if she was enjoying herself, she replied:

-Nunca he visto tantas novedades juntas...Una vez vino un circo y traía payasos, perros brincadores, trapecios y gente voladora, mujeres desnudas encima de caballos con un lazo en la cola, pero nunca había visto tantas como ahora. (p.116)

Her initial reaction to the Devil on his throne is laughter:

Marieta viendo aquello tenía ganas de reír... (p.35)

Even if one might feel inclined to limit the importance given to the irreverent reactions of a small child, one cannot dismiss the good sense of some of the questions she puts to Spic. Here she is questioning him on how the Devil arrived at the sabbath:

-¿Cómo ha venido? ¿A caballo? ¿Dónde está el caballo? ¿O en coche? En coche es difícil porque no cabe el señor diablo por la portezuela para entrar. ¿A pie? Dime, caballero Spic. Y es muy grande... (p.36)

Spic does not give a satisfactory reply and his evasions are not to his credit. They suggest that the sabbath as a whole could not stand up to this kind of critical scrutiny. When Agueda, following Marieta's lead, puts similar questions to Spic, she too is left dissatisfied:

-Pero ¿en qué quedamos? - preguntó otra vez Agueda -. ¿Es el diablo o es un hombre disfrazado? Por lo que dice usted parece que es un hombre. (p.43)

The answer to all these questions are very simple: the Devil is a man in disguise and presumably came as he leaves, on foot. Spic's evasiveness over these simple matters - chief satanic apologist that he is - makes us suspicious of him, the sabbath and satanism.

Silly and comic as the sabbath clearly is, how is it that Spic and Agueda take it seriously?

Agueda had begun to embrace satanism shortly after her husband had left her for a novice. The memory of it sorely rankled and she had told Marieta that she was widowed. She

had been further disturbed and annoyed by the mixed motives that inspired her husband to make a generous settlement:

"Un día acabó de leer algo en latín, cerró el libro, se frotó los ojos, suspiró y dijo: ¡qué gran verdad! Al final lo perdemos todo, absolutamente todo. Es decir lo perdemos todo menos aquello que hemos dado voluntariamente, lo que hemos regalado." (p.84)

In his generosity he had made a clever spiritual investment to his own advantage and he had covered his wife's material needs. He also sought at the same time to win her forgiveness:

"Quiero que no te falte nada y que el bienestar en que te dejo te ayude a perdonarme..." (p.16)

From that time onwards, Agueda had started to think of the relationship between good and evil and to question the power of God.

"Desde entonces me negué a creer que la vida sea obra de Dios. Hasta el mayor bien se convierte en mal cuando se trata de conseguir por él alguna forma de bienestar en esta vida y de bienaventuranza eterna en la otra." (p.85)

She came to believe that the idyllic happiness she had formerly enjoyed with her husband was inherently false:

"Mi felicidad con él no había sido la vida sino algo así como el ideal compuesto y perfumado, y decorado y cualificado de la vida...Y todo lo componíamos nosotros, yo con mi amor y él con su deseo y su respeto. Una vida ideal." (p.127)

And she finally reached the conclusion that her husband's infidelity and his mixed motives for reaching a generous settlement reflected his true human nature and the true nature of reality, essentially ruled by the Devil:

"El vive la vida tal como la vida es. Vive y se deja llevar. Es lo que hizo cuando me abandonó. Ahora comprendo que el pobre barón galán ha hecho lo que no podía menos de hacer. Seguir la ley de su majestad." (p.128)

In other words, Agueda embraced satanism because it provided an explanation for the collapse of her idyll, her husband's sexual interest in another woman and the curious way that good and evil could be mixed. A philosophy based on a maleficent,

libidinous God made much more sense than conventional Christianity. It provided a metaphysical description much more appropriate to the new reality that was revealed to her. Her problem was a serious one and she had approached satanism in a serious spirit. H.T.F. Rhodes¹ suggests that the Black Mass has often been considered too lightly:

Those who have dismissed the Black Mass as nothing more than a figment of a superstitious and medieval imagination have only succeeded in doing so by oversimplifying the definition of it. That there existed not one Black Mass but many with corresponding mutations...in the being worshipped is the only interpretation consistent with the facts. The only constant which seems to connect the problematical and confusing equations is the problem that has ever preoccupied the human mind - that of the opposing principles called good and evil, and the undiscovered relation subsisting between them. Considered as experimental attempts, however, inadequately conceived, to discover what the relationship is, these theological curiosities cease to be absurd. (p.81)

Satanism and the sabbath, then, could be serious. They are certainly so in the case of Agueda.

Spic's case is a little more complicated but similar. The narrator describes him and Agueda as,

...dos nobles víctimas cada cual a su manera de una misma experiencia. O de una experiencia parecida. (p.140)

The experience was that of being despised. Spic was the victim of general social disdain rather than the victim of an individual. After his marriage, which had been conducted by the Devil and had involved the deflowering of the bride, Spic had not been happy. He had a mistress, la doncella de Aix, and his wife met lovers in the gardens of the castle where they lived, nevertheless Spic was considered a respectable man and as such despised:

...era yo entonces como ese hombre honrado al que la gente desprecia un poco. (p.139)

¹H.T.F.Rhodes: The Satanic Mass, (London, 1954)

There is further evidence for the social insecurity of Spic in a curious nervous tic he displays throughout the novel: almost every comment he makes and every speech - particularly when he ^{speaking} is/about the sabbath and the predominance of evil in the world - ends with a question. These questions are of the kind that demands - or at least expects - the listener's approval:

"¿No es encantador?" (p.39)

"¿No es milagroso?" (p.42)

"¿No es mágico?" (p.95)

Furthermore, he is very susceptible to flattery; he glows with satisfaction when Agueda pays him a compliment:

- Soy un ignorante en muchas cosas - concedía Spic, benévolo - pero en esta materia lo que usted quiera, señora. Hay quien me considera realmente versado. Yo no digo que lo soy, sino que la gente lo dice. La gente con una rara unanimidad. ¿No es notable?
(p.101)

Now we also know that Spic was very jealous. Agueda dismissed all the mystifying and ambiguous explanations that he offered in respect of the death of the child born to his wife, suggesting in their place the following much simpler interpretation,

"Usted no estaba seguro de que el personaje que los casó a ustedes...fuera su majestad...Y la presencia bastarda del bebé le recordaba alguna forma de incómoda miseria. Usted estuvo tres años preguntando a su esposa (ella me lo ha dicho) qué había sentido cuando fue poseída por el diablo... para ver si había sido él o había sido nada más un diácono y un cuarterón de la buena entrada...Y después de tres años sin poder sacar nada en claro a su esposa usted indujo a la doncella de Aix a asomarse al torreón y tirar al bebé...Confíeselo de una vez caballero Spic... Es usted el típico caballero spánnida. El clásico varón de la alta meseta. El carpotovetónico impenitente, cornigacho, secreto y arguido." (pp.158-159).

which Spic confirmed. Now if the child born to Spic's wife really did constitute for him the memory of an "incómoda miseria", is it not likely that the continued infidelity of his wife, however much he might claim to encourage and approve it, in fact wounded him deeply? In this regard one cannot help

but notice the frequency of her infidelity which stemmed from the marriage ceremony itself:

"En cada vagabundo ve mi esposa al Tenebro. Y...bueno tenemos en el parque del castillo un lugar apropósito."

(p.139)

I would suggest therefore that Spic is a rather inadequate, insecure character very much concerned with what people think who, whatever his original reasons for embracing satanism, subsequently sought in it a means of winning genuine, social respect and of rationalising the infidelity of his wife, which he could not control. Satanism suffers from having such a dubious character so prominent among its adherents. However, though Spic is such a dubious character and though in satanism he looked for a means of justifying himself rather than truth, nevertheless one cannot dismiss everything he says, whilst a satanist. True, it is silly to speak simplistically of omnipotent, diabolical maleficence, but it was equally silly to speak simplistically of divine providence in the first place. Spic may not propound a more sophisticated and inclusive ideology than Christianity, but his comments do provide a necessary antidote to facile, Christian thinking and cannot be dismissed without more ado. There are¹ many weakly disguised, pagan, sexual symbols in the Catholic ritual; there is an embarrassing discrepancy between what is practised and what is preached in the Church and among the population as a whole and such phenomena as theft, murder and fratricidal civil wars do make one begin to doubt Christian claims that the world and everything in it were created by an all-powerful, beneficent God who still rules it. The reader cannot help but wonder if Marieta's

¹Sender develops this point at length in his non-fictional work, Ensayos sobre el infringimiento cristiano, (Mexico, 1967). To quote one example:

mother would not have been a lot happier and would not have found life a lot more intelligible if she could have abandoned Catholic notions of goodness and happiness in the after life and adopted a more realistic - and satanic? - notion of the here and now. Here is Marieta's description of her:

- Nunca va a ninguna parte mi madre. No sale de la cocina. De su cuarto a la iglesia y de la iglesia a la cocina. Y no quiere a nadie. Un día me miraba así, fijo y sin hablar y de pronto suspiró y dijo: hija mía, si no hubieras nacido sería mejor. Ya ves. Ella no quiere que viva porque todo es desgracia en el mundo. Eso dice. Ella querría que yo fuera un ángel en el cielo. (pp.17-18)

After Spic and Agueda the reasons why Marieta and three middle-aged lesbians are present at the sabbath are very straightforward. Marieta had come across the sabbath by accident but stayed and enjoyed herself there because of the pleasure of being frightened and doing the forbidden:

La niña cada vez que decía el nombre del diablo apretaba la mano de la señora con una especie de terror gustoso. Siempre había tenido ganas de asomarse a aquel bosque prohibido por su madre. (p.12)

Without making too much of the point one could say that Marieta used satanism as a channel for her rebelliousness against her mother. For the three lesbians satanism and the sabbath had a clear psychological and social function; as the narrator explains,

El satanismo era un ellas un pretexto para ejercer alguna forma de crueldad contra cualquier clase de hombres. (pp.77-78)

Las bellotas que son tema decorativo común a todos los altares católicos aparecen en la mitología aria primitiva según la cual eran cosechadas y almacenadas en los bosques de la más remota antigüedad. En las casullas católicas, en la ornamentación de los altares españoles aparecen constantemente sin que nadie recuerde su origen fálico. (p.61).

Emen hetan is an ironical and ambiguous work, similar to a number of novels that Sender has written since the Civil War. Much of what Spic says and much of satanism as seen in this book must be dismissed and laughed at and the author, through innumerable details, ensures that we do. However, certain things cannot be dismissed and it is Sender's ironical achievement that though so very much of the sabbath and satanism is silly and though Spic's adherence to satanism is for personal reasons of a dubious kind, he as a satanist and a charlatan can be morally and philosophically enlightening. The case of Agueda is a further focus of interest. After a personal experience of suffering, which raised philosophical questions, she sought and found in silly satanism genuine help in understanding and coming to terms with reality. Emen hetan, then, is very much an attack upon simplistic thinking.

In the course of my analysis and in my conclusions, my concern has been to draw attention to what in Emen hetan is the germ of what was to become Las criaturas and to point to the features which, as will be seen, Emen hetan shares with other works that Sender has written since the Civil War. For these reasons, I have focussed my attention particularly on certain less obvious aspects of the novel, e.g. the psychology of Spic and Agueda and its relation to their adherence to satanism, and on the levels of ambiguity. For most readers, however, the lasting impression left by Emen hetan will be its furious attack on a number of Spanish sacred cows, and indeed this is the most important feature of the whole book. In this respect the novel is quite unambiguous and unironical and its manner more akin to the kind of work¹ Sender was writing before the

¹Note for example the following passage taken from O.P.;
El crimen metafísico no está en el suplicio del Chavea

Spanish Civil War. In Emen hetan, Spain, the country that traditional Spanish historians and moralists have suggested was the home of mysticism and true religion, is presented as being the kingdom of the Devil, who - according to Spic - ought rightfully to be crowned as the king of Spain from time immemorial (pp.89-90). Roman Catholic ritual and symbolism, considered traditionally as expressing Christian mysteries and truths, are presented as being primarily pagan. The Devil, the Church's arch enemy, is seen as presiding over it from medieval times (pp.86-87), his influence apparent in Catholicism's ubiquitous hypocrisy (pp.61-62), the immorality of its members from the Popes downwards (p.87) and the silly and mortal squabbles over dogma and belief with which both the Church and its adherents in Spain have been associated (pp.87-88). In respect of this last detail, it is quite apparent that Emen hetan is not primarily conceived as a work of only historical relevance. Sender is attacking the rule of the Catholic

(a political prisoner), en los piojos de el de la Hostia (another political prisoner), en la oscuridad de la celda del Periodista. Está arriba, en el despacho del director, tan limpio y comfortable, en el ministerio y el periódico de modas, en la hostia consagrada y en el escaparate elegante, en las pizarras de los Bancos y en la película estúpida. El crimen metafísico está en tu conciencia lector burgués que has comprado este libro esperando fuertes impresiones sensuales, como cuando escoges en licor o un cigarro. Pero ahora, antes, después, cuando el sol entra en tu cuarto y encareces el privilegio de su compañía, no debes olvidar que no es de día en todas partes, que no llega el sol a todos los rincones, que en la cárcel está la noche infinita y que en ella se va organizando y está creciendo el fermento que obligará al sol de mañana, quizá esta misma tarde, a que sea para todos o a que deje de arder. (pp.103-104)

Church in modern times including the Spanish Civil War, the way of life of the Nationalist supporters of the Church, and the much publicised alleged virtues of the Nationalist cause, viz. that it was a rebellion against evil and a defence of something intrinsically just and moral, and part of a noble tradition. Sender's simple statement, underlying the irony and the exaggeration is that the Church has often been hollow and corrupt, a source of hypocrisy and bloodshed, and that the association of the Church and the Nationalists in the Civil War, was to the discredit of both parties. Furthermore, the Church's metaphysical description of reality has often proved woefully inadequate for sincere adherents in situations of emotional distress. But this latter point is only touched on in Ementan, the task of exploring it was left to Las criaturas saturnianas.

CHAPTER IV

Las criaturas saturnianas¹

Emen hetan investigated the ways that human psychology and philosophy could be related: Agueda, following an extremely

¹Carrasquer's suggestions as to the reasons for Sender's choice of title are illuminating and helpful - op.cit., pp.250-251 - on the basis of the common identification of the Roman Saturn with the Greek Cronos, Carrasquer sees, among other things, a general allusion to ambition and strife in the novel. One could add to the particular examples that Carrasquer offers by way of substantiation the fact that the novel is set during a most cataclysmic historical period, that following the French Revolution, and furthermore the Revolution is a constant subject of Cagliostro's conversation. Further to this, however, Sender and various fictional characters of his have understood the word "saturniano" in a rather different and special way.

One of the things that seems to have impressed Sender about the planet Saturn is that it was illuminated more brightly than any other planet in the solar system and that this illumination was due to something negative, the destruction of the planet's former satellites. An important, general principle, of application in the field of morality, could be deduced. Here are the words of Sr. Photynos, a character in El tonatiu, a short story included in Cabrerizas altas, (Mexico, 1965):

Lo saturniano no es lo que los artistas y los poetas creen sino algo muy diferente...Lo saturniano es sencillamente la antivirtud en cualquiera de sus formas cuando esa antivirtud es más afirmativa que la vida misma de donde la virtud procede...El anillo de Saturno, es decir los tres anillos porque son tres, están formados por miles de millones de pedruscos a los que han quedado sus viejos satélites desintegrados. Gracias a esos pedruscos y a la reciprocidad de sus reflejos (intercambiándose una luz que luce así al mismo tiempo en todos los segmentos del planeta) el planeta es el más iluminado del sistema solar. Gracias a su desdén de la virtud convencional los saturnianos son los únicos seres verdaderamente virtuosos del mundo. (pp.109-110).

The application of this concept to Las criaturas is quite straightforward: Sender is suggesting that what might appear negative in the different ways that, for example, Spic, Cagliostro, Agueda and even Lizaveta show distrust and criticism for conventional mores and beliefs has a positive and affirmative nature. In their own way, as victims of destructive, cosmic forces, the characters of Las criaturas illuminate their own world and, perhaps, the reader's.

The same basic concept, though this time the application is

distressing, personal, experience, sought in Satanism a new and more adequate explanation of the nature of reality and the relationship of good and evil; Spic sought social approval and a way of rationalising the infidelity of his wife. Satanism was made to serve different psychological functions according to the person who professed adherence to it. It was seen to contain much that was trivial and absurd, but one could not gainsay everything in it, nor could one dismiss either the good faith with which people might be drawn to it, nor the benefit people such as Agueda derive from it.

A shortened, polished and slightly modified version of Emen hetan constitutes one episode in Las criaturas, forming approximately one-eighth of the later novel, which develops the essential themes of Emen hetan. Thus we meet Spic and Agueda again, and their experiences of suffering and their responses to them are again investigated, with much elaboration in the case of Spic. The experiences and preoccupations of the new characters of Las criaturas fit into the same general

aesthetic rather than moral, underlies the reply Sender gives in answer to Peñuelas' question on the general meaning of the work. (I quote from Peñuelas: Conversaciones).

- Tiene una intención esteticista algo desesperada. Todo es catastrófico, es decir, fundamentalmente negativo. Pero no es un negativismo que acaba en sí mismo. Es como decir, la vida es horrorosa, pero vean ustedes qué placentera es al mismo tiempo. Hay un poco de amor, y ese amor es exquisito. Hay un poco de inocencia, también exquisita. Hay un poco de generosidad. Hay estampas de la vida humana llenas de apelaciones a alguna forma difícil, pero hay también una armonía genuina. (p.133)

Another comment by Sender to Peñuelas, (ibid. p.134) again illustrates the same concept. It is accompanied by a rather more conventional reference to Saturn.

- Lo saturniano es lo funesto. Saturno es el planeta de lo funesto, del veneno. Todavía los pintores llaman cólico saturniano o saturnino, al envenenamiento del plomo. Cada planeta tiene un metal asignado y a Saturno corresponde al plomo. Lo saturniano es lo funesto y al mismo tiempo lo misterioso y lírico.

It should be added that "Saturniano" is not a common form of the word in Spain, either in the above senses or any other. It is not to be found in the Diccionario de la Real Academia Española. "Saturniano" may possibly be an unconscious anglicism of Sender's.

pattern of those of Agueda and, if not the old, certainly the new, Spic. Indeed, the novel can be seen as a series of interrelated case histories of this type through which Sender seems to suggest that man's fundamental problem in life is to adapt psychologically and intellectually to what he experiences and sees:

...el problema de cada cual, desde que nace, es el de la adaptación a la realidad por sus propios medios (hechos, imágenes, sueños). Tarea laboriosa y enfadosa. Tarea ardua de veras. (p.313)

Las criaturas can thus be seen to be a more explicit and general as well as a more developed novel than Emen hetan. One interesting feature of the new development is that satanism is not the only intellectual response to reality that is considered. Another interesting feature is the way the ambiguity of the earlier novel, which centered on Spic and his ideas, is transferred to a new character, Cagliostro.

In respect of the historical validity of Sender's presentation of his two main characters - Lizaveta and Cagliostro - it is illuminating to consider Pepe Garcés' differences with Vicente on historical research:

Yo no podía entenderme con Vicente frente a las cosas antiguas de Aragón. El se las daba de investigador y exigía fechas y datos concretos. Ah, y fuentes. Yo era más emocional y menos riguroso y mezclaba gustosamente la leyenda con la historia. Cuando me parecía bien que una cosa hubiera sucedido la daba por sucedida sin más garantías que la tradición conservada oralmente y transmitida de abuelos a nietos. La leyenda es mejor que el documento. (p.85 Vol.III, Crónica).

It is also illuminating to reflect on King's frustrated attempts to write a biography of Sender.¹ Solid historical fact concerning Lizaveta and Cagliostro are singularly lacking. Legends, of greater or lesser credulity, romanticism and sentimentality, on the other hand, abound in profusion. (Lizaveta

¹Op.cit., p.13.

was to inspire at least one painting, by Flavitsky, and Cagliostro works by Alexandre Dumas (père), Goethe and Schiller.) It was on legend, particularly in the case of Lizaveta, that Sender drew. But as I hope my general argument as to the points of similarity between Las criaturas and other post-Civil War, though non-historical, works will suggest Sender made even legend serve his own personal, novelistic purposes, viz., his concern for the problems of man, if not at all times, in the twentieth century. I would endorse Carrasquer's general point with regard to Sender's attitude to history in his historical novels:

Parte de sus aficiones o empeños personalísimos y de este disiderátum subjetivo depende la elección del tema o episodio histórico. Esto mismo implica que para Sender el pasado no tiene ningún interés arqueológico, sino una importancia de ejemplo para el presente, si no ya para todos los presentes. (Op.cit., p.258)

In practice, in Las criaturas, this means that Sender chose the historical legend best tallying with his purposes and abandoned both that as well as historical fact when it suited him.

According to one account¹, Lizaveta was indeed the daughter of the Empress Elizabeth and the Count Alexis Razumovsky and she was the innocent victim of Orlov and Catherine who feared her projected marriage with Prince Radziwyl of Poland. She was abducted by Orlov, raped by him and his crew and imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, where she drowned twelve years later when the Neva flooded her cell in 1787.

Another account², rather more carefully researched, tells

¹Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europea-americana (Espasa-Calpe, Madrid-Barcelona, 1905-30).

²E.M. Almedingen: Catherine the Great (London, 1963).

a rather different tale and one very much at odds with Las criaturas. According to this, though the morganatic marriage between Razumovsky and Elizabeth seems indisputable, there is considerable doubt as to whether or not they had any children and also as to whether the young woman who throughout England, France, Germany and Italy variously presented herself as Princess Ali of Wladzimir, Princess Azov, the Countess of Pimberg and Elizabeth II of Russia was such a child. This account would see Lizaveta as the victim of Catherine's cruel though understandable political machinations - it was the period of Emilian Pugachev's rebellion - but as not altogether guiltless. She had presented a claim to the Russian throne before knowing Prince Radziwyl, and he was, moreover, only one of several important protectors and supporters, amongst whom figures the Duke of Limburg, Sir William Hamilton and a Mr Dick, the English Consul in Leghorn. Furthermore, her meeting with Orlov was not wholly of his devising or Catherine's orders: Lizaveta had written to him previously concerning her claim and had issued a manifesto calling on the Russian Navy to mutiny. This account makes no mention of her rape and makes quite clear that it was not Orlov who conducted her to Russia by boat. She is said to have died in the Peter and Paul Fortress of a lung infection in 1775.

Accounts¹ of Cagliostro's life coincide in considering him a charlatan of the first order, and in saying that he was primarily known as a doctor and necromancer. They differ in respect of whether or not he gained what knowledge he had from travels in Turkey and the Arab world. He certainly enjoyed an international reputation and a large following in England, France, Germany and

¹Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europea-americana, Encyclopedia Britanica (24 vols. Chicago, London, Toronto 1971) and Chambers Encyclopedia (15 vols, London 1950)

Italy and he was certainly imprisoned in the Bastille in association with the Affair of the Diamond Necklace. Not all accounts mention his unsuccessful attempts to win the favour of Catherine the Great. Unlike his fictional counterpart - in Las criaturas -, the historical Cagliostro married - Lorenza Feliciani, called Serafina - and his wife figured prominently in some of his intrigues. Certain accounts suggest that it was she who made the denunciation that led to his imprisonment in the Fortress of San Leo in Urbino - in Las criaturas, Sant'Angelo in Rome - where he died in 1795. Others suggest that his wife too was condemned to perpetual confinement, in a convent.

The life of Elizabeth Romanov, as seen in Las criaturas can be divided into three parts: Florence, her abduction and imprisonment, and after leaving the Peter and Paul Fortress. The description of her life in Florence is little more than a general presentation of the girl and her attitudes, serving as an introduction to the existentially crucial experience recounted in chapters IV-VI which, as the rest of the novel shows, totally transformed her.

The major features of Lizaveta in Florence were her naivety, innocence and lack of experience. As a member of the Russian royal family, albeit in exile, she lived in protected luxury. She only moved in aristocratic circles and was allowed no close friends. She was fifteen and knew nothing of political intrigue. When her father died suddenly, she was impressed by the fragility of human life and happiness. In Radzivil, a Polish prince who sought her hand, she sought nothing more than private, personal happiness. There was nothing of interest or value in his political ambitions:

"Si somos carne mortal y podredumbre, por qué no ser felices ahora en cualquier parte, por ejemplo, en Italia que es país hecho para la felicidad de los enamorados?" (p.37)

In Orlof, she saw no more than an important and attractive

representative of her native country, which had the exotic charm of the unfamiliar. With him she could make a social success:

Ella por su parte estaba orgullosa de Orlof y cuando lo presentaba a los Médicis parecía decir con la mirada: "Eh, ¿qué les parece a ustedes la gente de mi tierra?" (p.40)

Her decisions to attend the party Orlof gave on board his boat in Leghorn and to sleep there afterwards reflect her trusting innocent nature and her situation of vulnerability following her father's death.

There could be no starker contrast between Lizaveta and some of the people around her, notably Orlof and the Cardinal Ricci, a close friend of her late father, and the result is that when she becomes aware of the actions of such people she is dreadfully confused. She could not understand how Cardinal Ricci, a Roman Catholic like Lizaveta, could have denounced her marriage to Catherine, a member of the Russian Orthodox Church. She weakly pleaded to Orlof that if her projected marriage constituted such a political threat, she would not marry. How could she have deserved being cast into the Peter and Paul Fortress:

No podía creer que su proyecto de matrimonio con Karl - nunca consumado - justificara todo aquello. (p.77)

She could not understand how the officers who grew passionate in her arms never listened to her or showed the slightest interest, nor how the common sailors could fight over her yet never use their strength to protect or help her. And how was it that she could become pregnant without anyone having loved her?

No entendía que pudieran nacer los hijos sin la intervención del amor que Dios había puesto en los corazones. (p.81)

Though undoubtedly, the kind of experience the princess tried to understand and adjust to would tax the mind and powers of reasoning of the most experienced and worldly wise, it is

nevertheless true to say the degree of her shock and confusion is directly proportionate to her innocence and naivety. Her conceptions of politics and human nature, in fact of reality in general, were inadequate to explain her abduction and imprisonment and everything associated with them.

Orlof spells out to Lizaveta that she is the incidental victim of the intrigues of Ricci and Radzivil, and of the rivalry between Orlof and Potemkin for Catherine's favors and support, and suggests that her situation is hopeless:

- La política es la política y tú eres la muñeca que yo regalo a la emperatriz el día de su cumpleaños... Las muñecas son para romperlas tú sabes... entre la señora y yo tú vas a deshacerte, novia del paladín de Vilna, como un copo de nieve entre dos brasas. (p.69)

But Lizaveta could not accept that so much misfortune could befall one who was innocent, or that her case was hopeless. Thus it is that she takes seriously Orlof's largely cynical proposal that she could earn her salvation by making him or one of the officers fall in love with her. She needed to believe in the possibility of hope, and in misfortune and happiness being related to human merit or morality. She could not assimilate the meaningless, hopeless horror of which Orlof had spoken to the ethics and metaphysics of her youth. As Orlof had indicated (pp.67-69), Liza's task was well nigh impossible, and she failed. Nevertheless it enabled Lizaveta to relate herself to her suffering and misfortune. She could explain her subsequent imprisonment in terms of her own failings:

Recordaba ...a veces las palabras de Orlof: "Estás perdida a no ser que algún oficial se enamore de ti y quiera casarse contigo." No se había enamorado nadie y acababa por pensar que no era bastante atractiva para que un oficial de la armada de la emperatriz se interesara por su destino de mujer ni siquiera dándose entera y ofreciendo su persona y su vida. Nadie quería su vida ni su persona. (p.78).

In exactly the same way Lizaveta was later to understand and explain the justice of her imprisonment and misfortune in terms of her inability to keep her child alive in the Peter and Paul Fortress:

(Ella)...vio el cuerpo del niño sobre el barro...Se dio cuenta de que el niño no vivía y pensó que la culpa era de ella; por cuya razón si hasta entonces se sentía inocente, a partir de aquel hecho creía merecer la prisión, y la muerte. (p.102)

She explained things to herself thus, even though she was not a mother of her own volition, she had done everything in her power to look after the child and the child had succumbed in a cell which was specifically designed to kill its inmates. Her argument was irrational, but made things seem intelligible to her.

At other times during her twelve years' imprisonment Lizaveta tried to understand what had happened to her in other ways. At one point she started to believe in a God who lived off human suffering:

Había ido modificando ella su idea de Dios. No exigía rezos el dios cristiano... Lo único que pedía aquel dios era el sufrimiento de los seres vivos y ella cumplía su misión día y noche, la misión sufridora y penadora que Dios había querido darle. (p.85)

It would have been grotesque to ask a Christian God for her daily bread inside a prison cell or to pray a Hail Mary celebrating the fruit of the Virgin's womb in view of the circumstances of her own pregnancy. The only god who seemed to have relevance to her prison cell and her fellow inmates, two rats, was a Rat God. He did not understand or help her precisely because he was not human:

"No me entiende a mí sino a las ratas, porque el dios de Pedro y Pablo debe ser el de las ratas. Por eso no es menos dios y aunque yo soy persona y él es rata el dios de las ratas es más que yo, mucho más que yo, infinitamente más que yo." (p.93)

But for one occasion (p.95) Lizaveta does not protest against her imprisonment. She accepts what has befallen her and tries to explain it to herself, at times emphasising her own guilt and responsibility, at times emphasising the fearful nature of the universe and its god that allowed such things to happen. The idea of herself had become so undermined that she respected her gaolers and those who had illtreated her:

Sentía por los carceleros un respeto que antes solo había sentido por el cardenal y el conde Rasumovski. (p.84)

Se odiaba a sí misma y aquel odio la inclinaba a admirar y reverenciar a los que la habían maltratado. Especialmente a Orlof. ...Así se conducía Dios tal vez con los hombres. (p.105)

(A recent case - that of Patricia Hearst to which Sender referred with interest in a recent interview¹ - suggests the accuracy of Sender's improbable² psychological description.)

Extravagant and strange as were some of the psychological reactions and ideas of Lizaveta, nevertheless her abduction and imprisonment were not totally destructive experiences. She

¹In Triunfo, Barcelona, 8 June 1974, p.18.

²Further corroboration that Sender's portrayal of Lizaveta's psychology is not extravagant, may be found in Liliana Cavani's recent film The Night Porter. According to Dirk Bogarde, one of the stars of the film, interviewed by Derek Malcolm - Guardian (Mon. Oct. 28, 1974) p.10 - :

...Cavani, who is still a young woman with no first hand knowledge of the war, had been shocked to find, when making a documentary about the concentration camps, how many of the female inmates had fallen deeply in love with their guards. This was often far more than a matter of finding someone, anyone, to afford them some protection. There are women now who visit the camps every year, not to put flowers on the graves of their fellow victims who did not survive but to remember the guards with whom they had a liason. "You may not believe this," says Bogarde, "but we have both seen this with our own eyes."

Light has been shed on the general question of the relationship between individuals and authority figures, and on what would appear to be a psychological need to believe in an authority figure, by the experiments conducted by Dr. Stanley Milgram at Yale University. See R.D.Laing: "The Obvious" in The Dialectics of Liberation, (ed. David Cooper, Harmondsworth, 1968).

learned about loneliness as part of the essential human condition, and for all her reverence for Orlof saw that he too was alone:

Estaba aprendiendo que la soledad era la circunstancia primera y mayor y la condenación de todos los seres vivos. Todos estaban solos. También Orlof. (p.85)

Implicitly she began to recognise the inadequacy of her preparation for life in Florence:

La vida era compleja y todos los hombres y mujeres sabían vivir menos ella. (p.91)

In her imprisonment and abduction her general views on life had been considerably broadened and she is forced to include within them - and come to terms, however inadequately, with - evil and suffering which formerly she had either not known or she had shunned. In that way it is a considerably more mature and perceptive Lizaveta who leaves the Peter and Paul Fortress than the girl one saw in Florence. Lizaveta's abduction and imprisonment were crucial experiences in her life. She was quite transformed by them. After her experiences one can see the following three features in her: certain negative, psychological reflexes; a sensitivity to the psychology of others, in particular to those who had suffered as she had done; and a general, philosophical interest in the nature of reality, deriving specifically from her rape and imprisonment.

The strange and intense feeling she has for Orlof, to which we have referred, remain with her throughout her life. Because Orlof had played such a crucial role in the major experience of her life, she thought that he might be able to explain some of her most inner feelings and impressions. How was it that she and he, although in no sense saints, seemed - like saints - to have exhausted all levels and aspects of life and reality? She wrote to him, asking:

"Si no soy santa, ¿cómo es que la he gastado, mi vida, y también la de los otros, es decir, toda realidad posible? No lo entiendo. Tal vez podría explicármelo usted. O el cardenal de Florencia." (p.320)

Orlof had had the power of life and death over Lizaveta and even afterwards in spite of herself she tended to see in him a king of God:

¿Es posible que yo siga pensando en Orlof como en Dios? La sugestión le pareció dislocada y bárbara... (p.321)

The journey from Leghorn to Kronshtadt had bound her and him together in a way that could never be matched or rivalled.

She wanted no intimate relationship with anyone, man or woman, but the only possible one would have been with Orlof:

Cagliostro había querido llevarla a su cuarto, pero sólo había una persona en el mundo con quien ella podría estar a solas: Orlof. No por amor. Ella no era ya una mujer de amor. Pero con él nada importaba ya nada. Con Orlof, que había matado a Radzivil y había querido matarla a ella después de hacerla sufrir las más abyectas vejaciones. (p.181)

Because of her extraordinary regard for Orlof she sought to justify his involvement in the murder of Radzivil: the murder of Radzivil put an end to political ambitions which could have led to the deaths of many thousands of men for reasons indifferent to them. Though this was undoubtedly true, though it is difficult to judge the political ambitions of Radzivil for we do not know to what extent his expressed idealism - he wanted to introduce Western Civilisation into Russia - was the cloak for personal and national ambition, nor what the results of his actions might have been, Lizaveta's argument is extremely odd and insubstantial. Given the political and social structure of Eastern Europe at the time, any major political action would have entailed the loss of life of very many men and Orlof and Catherine, the murderers of the legitimate Tsar Peter III, were unlikely to be moved by such considerations either in respect

of their own actions or those of their opponents. Nevertheless, in the following passage, Lizaveta implies that Orlof and Catherine were the enlightened and impartial executors of a just and moral law:

Radzivil tenía ambiciones en cuya realización estaba tal vez implicada la vida de mil o de diez mil soldados rusos que en el fondo carecían de ideas políticas...A Radzivil lo castigaban anticipadamente como causante posible de aquel suplico de los soldados heridos cuyas entrañas humeantes eran comidas por los lobos en las noches de invierno. (p.138)

In her determination to justify Orlof, Lizaveta passed over the particular horror of Radzivil's punishment, the complex of private and political intrigues which she knew from personal experience underlay the actions of Catherine and Orlof, and the fact that she had once loved Radzivil. (Liza's argument is further weakened by the emphasis on the concrete, physical details of the soldier being eaten alive by wolves. The horror is gratuitous: for every soldier who died in this way many more would be killed in battle, and a number of men would undergo the experience of being eaten by wolves without Radzivil or his political ambitions.) Following a similarly extravagant argument Lizaveta expresses a strong implicit gratitude¹ towards Orlof for having helped God in the process of her destruction:

Era una mañana de cielo gris e iba pensando que la tarea más importante de la vida de cada cual es su muerte. La destrucción de uno en la cual colabora Dios de una manera importante y eficaz. La tarea lenta - a veces rápida - de la destrucción de cada uno de nosotros. Era lo único que contaba en cada caso. Orlof la había ayudado en aquella tarea. Orlof y no Radzivil, que quería salvarla para quién sabe qué clase de falsas glorias. (p.139)

Accepting there is some validity in Lizaveta's criticism of

¹Pepe Garcés, Crónica, Vol.III, p.561, felt a certain gratitude to his father, whom he too had regarded as a kind of God, for having been so cruel to him.

Radzivil's "falsas glorias", Orlof certainly cannot be commended for being alive to the speciousness of worldly ambition. Furthermore, if Lizaveta had learned anything from the sufferings inflicted upon her by him, he certainly can take no credit for it. He is merely the instrumental cause of her growth in experience. The reader who notes the extravagance¹ of these arguments and of Lizaveta's feelings towards Orlof is not really surprised to discover that long after leaving prison she is not disabused of the cynicism of the proposal put to her at the time of her abduction, nor has she freed herself from feelings of guilt. Looking at Perjotín's daughter, she reflects:

"Esta niña tiene sólo ocho años, es decir que no estaba en el mundo todavía cuando Orlof me llevó desde Livorno a Cronstadt ni cuando me encerraron en Pedro y Pablo. Es un ser sin culpa." Todos los demás seres del mundo - los que vivían entonces - eran culpables, pero ella no los acusaba. El más culpable era ella misma que no había sabido merecer el amor de Orlof. (pp.370-371)

Parallel to the continued strangeness of Lisaveta's attitude to Orlof after leaving the Peter and Paul Fortress is her unabated reverence for, and trust in, Cardinal Ricci. Ricci had been the one other person who, in addition to Orlof, might have been able to explain how Lizaveta felt she had exhausted the possibilities

¹Extravagant as Lizaveta's arguments are, most readers will tend to agree with her conclusions, viz. that of the two men Orlof is the more commendable, if perhaps for reasons other than her's. Radzivil is a shadowy figure of whom all we know is that he was arrogant, young and naive. But for this last feature perhaps, he corresponds to the literary stereotype of a dashing hero. His naivety and its consequences give reality to that stereotype and by so doing it explode it. He is seen for the insubstantial figure he is. Orlof, see below pp. 133-4 is a man who for all his obvious failings, and indeed because of them, evinces pity. Through him, too, Sender explodes a literary stereotype of the conventional villain, and shows reality to be more complex and interesting than ever such stereotypes indicate. For Sender's explosion of the historical stereotype of a conquistador see La aventura equinocial de Lope de Aguirre, subtitled "una anti-epopeya" and my comment above, p.88.

of life. But when she returned to Florence and met the Cardinal, she found neither understanding nor consolation. Florence made her think not of the past but her present loneliness:

...fue al convento do San Francisco en cuyo mirador descansó un rato contemplando enfrente la alta colina con pinos recortados en la cumbree (sic). Allí la princesa lloró un poco, pero no su juventud perdida, su lejana infancia o la aventura secreta del barco de Orlof. Lloraba por su soledad presente. (p.385)

And the doddering old cardinal could offer her nothing more than a benign smile and a failing memory:¹

El cardenal sonreía. No se acordaba quizá de su propia denuncia contra Radzivil y sonreía. Era viejo el cardenal. (p.387)

But Lizaveta's attitude to Ricci, like her attitude to Orlof, lay quite outside her conscious control and had nothing to do with normal motivation. Though Ricci could clearly offer her no illumination of the past she continued to revere and trust him. She had full confidence in her feelings even though she did not understand them and even though the safety of her own true friend, Cagliostro, was at stake. She explained the enigma to Cagliostro:

C. -¿Qué clase de persona es usted que todavía puede creer en las palabras de monseñor Ricci?

L. -Ahora es precisamente cuando creo - decía ella.

C. -¿Pero por qué?

L. - No sé. Cuando se cree de veras en algo nunca se sabe por qué.

(pp.393-394)

¹Poetic or moral justice would demand a less relaxed and comfortable dotage for such an altogether wicked man, who had no saving graces whatsoever. It is true that he had seen the frustration of his schemes to become pope - appropriately enough because he had schemed too much - but a world governed by any true principle of moral justice would have punished him much more. Sender's point - made most obviously in the early experiences of Lizaveta - is that the real world is not such a world, and neither is the world in which his fictional characters move.

In contrast to the implicit trust and respect that she felt for Ricci and Orlof, in all other relationships Lizaveta was extremely cool and reserved. There was a tension within her: occasionally she would have liked to be effusive and confiding, but was inhibited. She feared people and would only show affection for animals when alone:

La princesa cuando estaba sola besaba a los gatitos en el cuello y la cabra que tenía un perfil gracioso de niña en la frente...Pero...sólo se permitía alguna efusión cuanto (sic) estaba segura de que nadie la veía. ..Delante de las personas de la casa toma una expresión fría y distante y no sabía cómo entenderse con ellas. La gente la intimidaba (sic) aún. Los otros la congelaban y paralizaban. Los otros eran el mal. El pecado. (p.126)

She saw no virtue in her reactions, regarding them as an unfortunate heritage of her imprisonment:

Tratando de explicarse aquellas reacciones pensaba en el Neva helado y se decía que, aunque ahora tenía el cuerpo caliente, su alma seguía congelada como aquellos témpanos que chocaban con las piedras de la espelunca debajo del agua... (p.126)

Thus it was that although she felt attracted to Cagliostro and very flattered by his attentions and obvious interest in her she could never think of him or anyone as her lover. She felt very inhibited too about asking for his help in understanding her past misfortunes, even though he seemed the appropriate person:

Pensaba la princesa: "He aquí un hombre que si yo quisiera me haría comprender mi desgracia." Pero se ponía a la defensiva temiendo que aquello podía ser todavía el origen de alguna catástrofe nueva y se confesaba a sí misma que tenía miedo. (p.183)

Only when faced with the extreme situation of Martinof and the accounts of her own rape did she confide in Cagliostro, but she never had the courage to show her swollen knee to him (p.215) and she never returned Pilar's confidences in spite of her evident regard for the girl (see p.333 and p.361). She was fearful of the adult, wakeful world, and only in sleep could she lose

her fear:

Dormía bien Lizaveta, y le gustaba soñar porque en sus sueños reía a menudo y nunca o casi nunca lo hacía despierta. (p.276)

The comments made to Lizaveta by Pilar are very interesting and important because the latter is a perceptive, young lady and is prompted by nothing other than the interests of friendship. Her criteria are fresh and young and she is not afraid of saying what she feels. Thus she dismisses the clothes that Lizaveta wears as "trapos ridículos" and having perceived that Lizaveta has suffered some misfortune in the past remarks upon it. In her youth, Pilar is interested in the present and the future and makes recommendations and comments to Lizaveta with that in mind. Thus she tells the princess where she can get her outmoded clothes modernised and advises her on personal relationships:

- Esta manera que tiene usted de no importarle las cosas puede entenderse como desprecio de la gente y no hay que despreciar a la gente aunque tampoco quererlos demasiado, ni tal vez quererlos en absoluto. Lo que hay que hacer es vivir con ellos de igual a igual y esperar. (p.334)

The validity of Pilar's criticisms, which Lizaveta does not contest, the good sense of the recommendations and the fact that Lizaveta does not follow them, show to what extent Lizaveta has been permanently and in many ways sadly affected by her abduction and imprisonment. Lizaveta does not live for the future, nor really for the present. She is largely unwilling and unable to forget the past and tackle the problems in her personal relationships. Pilar's comments explicitly confirm my argument as to the substantial, negative¹ inheritance Lizaveta received

¹I have given such emphasis to this aspect of Lizaveta's character after she leaves Peter and Paul because what criticism of the novel exists has omitted it altogether or has merely registered it with little comment. In the latter category is the passing reference to the case of Lizaveta made by Peñuelas, La obra

from her traumatic experiences.

With so much concealed behind her own impassive exterior, Lizaveta was sensitive to what might lie under the surface of the people she met, particularly when it was misfortune. This might be deemed one of the positive things she inherited from her experiences. Thus underneath Orlof's verbosity, in spite of the luxury in which he lived and the blind love she bore him, she saw a lonely victim of misfortune. In a way she was more fortunate:

"Pobre Orlof que no sabe cómo llevar su desgracia. Yo al menos creo haber aprendido a llevar la mía." (p.112)

Similarly she perceives the fundamental irrelevance of the profession of free-thinking and liberalism by Dimitri Alexandrovitch. She saw beneath it a man consumed by fear, much worse off than she:

"Tiene miedo. En cambio yo no tengo miedo a nada porque todo mi miedo se quedó en la prisión." (p.127)

She soon detected too there was something fundamentally amiss in the past of Spic. He like she had become mad:

"Este hombre ha sufrido como yo, pero se ha vuelto loco y su locura es todo palabras mientras que la mía es silencio." (p.239)

Orlof, Cagliostro and Spic had particularly high and enthusiastic opinions of Lizaveta, but it should not be forgotten that they each sought something from her. Orlof wanted her to give him her pardon. Cagliostro saw her as necessary for his "prodigios" (p.181) and Spic, if Cagliostro was not mistaken, looked on her for someone to officiate at the "sbats" he hoped to organise at Torre Cebreira. Whilst one would not wish to deny that Lizaveta gained from her experiences in prison a certain calm and resignation, before accepting without qualification the implicitly

narrativa (pp.215-217). In the former is Carrasquer's extraordinary idealisation of the princess and her experiences:

Lizaveta es un alma sublimada por el dolor, hieratizada, cristalizada por el largo contacto directo con la muerte.
(op.cit., p.241)

enthusiastic judgments of Orlof, Spic and Cagliostro, one would be wise to pay attention to the last quotation when Lizaveta referred to her own madness, and to the following dry comment she made on herself following praise from Cagliostro:

"Tiene razón cuando dice que no ha visto una mujer como yo. Ni la verá probablemente. Pero mi singularidad consiste en mi desgracia." (p.180)

The confusion produced in Lizaveta by Orlof's revelations to her at the beginning of her abduction and by everything else that happened to her until she was imprisoned, remained with her not only during her imprisonment but also afterwards. She sought to understand the universe that could contain the suffering she had endured and the God who ruled over it. If whilst in Peter and Paul she had conceived of a Rat God (p.93) when outside she thought of a God primarily interested in the destruction of individual human beings (p.139). No one explanation could satisfy her and she moved restlessly from one to another. People she met could be forgiven knowing her puzzlement and confusion because she was often so shy and fearful of people that she would not ask even the most innocent questions:

Lizaveta tenía miedo al laberinto de circunstancias tal vez peligrosas que una pregunta podía abrir e inaugurar.
(p.143)

And at other times, with her confusion unresolved, she would abandon the attempt to understand:

A fuerza de no poder entender la lógica del placer ni del dolor había llegado a desinteresarse de ellos... (p.331)

As we have seen, initially on leaving prison she had hopes that in Orlof, Cardinal Ricci and in Florence she might find some illumination of her past and of her present feelings associated with it. But this was not to be. The one person whom she did find able to help her was Cagliostro. She was still very

reserved, but if one notes the odd question she put to him and the rapt attention with which she listened to his long discourses, the strength of her need to know and understand and the importance of the Italian count's opinions to her are seen quite clearly. Her friendship with Cagliostro was cemented by the relevance of so much he said to the problems that vexed her. His reflections on happiness, misfortune and what enlightened people should think of the one and the other seemed addressed specifically to her and her situation, even though in fact it was a long time before she spoke to him of her past. When Cagliostro spoke of the failures of an eternal God and his eternal creation¹, for almost the first time Lizaveta was able to contemplate her own misfortunes with equanimity and understanding:

Eran las primeras palabras que llegaban aquella noche a lo hondo de la conciencia de Liza quien callaba, absorta. Creía que la idea de un dios divino pero fracasado la ayudaba a comprender, es decir a comprenderse a sí misma. A veces lo sentía en su alma a aquel dios y se dolía en su fracaso y en el de ella...los dos juntos e inseparables y aquello la consolaba. A veces pensaba con sorpresa que el fracaso de los dos - de Dios y de ella - juntos comenzaba a tener alguna clase de belleza y grandeza secretas. Pero, claro tenía miedo de insistir en sugerencias como aquélla. (pp.226-227)

She also recognised his perceptiveness in questions of human psychology, and it was of Cagliostro she thought when she tried to understand how she could pardon Orlof after all he had done to her:

Orlof, ella perdonaba a Orlof y para explicarse aquel perdón tenía que pensar en las cosas más raras y escuchar lo que decía Cagliostro. (p.181)

Lizaveta made no comment on the following observations of Cagliostro's but it may fairly be assumed that she found them

¹R.D.Laing (in "The Obvious") has suggested that attempts explain^{the} total social world system have sometimes come to the conclusion "that perhaps God is not dead: perhaps God is Himself mad." (p.16).

illuminating and exact like so many of the things he said:

Todo el mundo se abandona al plano de las cosas irreales cuando tropieza con el mal. Usted misma con sus vestidos y su bastón de cerezo. El lado congruente de la realidad tiene trampas, dobles fondos secretos y en ellos se mata por envidia, por miedo, por indiferencia y también por amor ...Spic cultiva formas de irre realidad que le parecen gratificadoras. Su mujer también. (p.394)

Cagliostro was able to help the confused Lizaveta who emerges from the Peter and Paul Fortress understand her own reactions in terms of general human psychology, in the same way that he had been able to help her relate her own particular case of misfortune to the general nature of reality. Little by little Cagliostro came to be her general mentor through life.

The life and psychology of Lizaveta are described in much more detail than those of any other of the characters of the novel. Little attention to them is required for their general similarity to Lizaveta is to become apparent.

The Agueda of Las criaturas is exactly the same as the Agueda of Emen hetan (see above, pp.108-110)

Spic is fundamentally the same as in the earlier book, only we know a lot more about him and a number of the hazier areas of his character are clarified. On the basis of this clarification and what a number of the new characters of Las criaturas say about him, one is able to confirm and elaborate the interpretation of him as he appeared in Emen hetan. Thus whereas in the earlier work there was only one adverse criticism made of him (Agueda's) on which one could draw in assessing Spic and in questioning satanism and his adherence to it, in Las criaturas there are at least half a dozen such criticisms. Some of these are grave in character and they all point in the same direction, suggesting that Spic was a

fundamentally unstable and unfortunate person, very different from what he thought he was or claimed to be and that his adherence to satanism was in part a product of his misfortune and instability. A hermit, whom Spic admires and goes to consult on matters of necromancy, confides his low opinion of the satanic sabbath and Spic and his wife, to Cagliostro: "Los marqueses han descarrilado...por el lado de Navarra." (p.305) Pilar, whom Spic also respected, dismissed a lot of his ideas as nonsense: "...tiene más locuras y fantasías que su mujer..." (p.333) Lizaveta, as we have ^{(see above} seen _{p.134}) detected madness and past misfortune in Spic, and Cagliostro suggested that the sabbath was psychologically necessary to him and his stability; through it he was purged:

"El caballero Spic parece ahora diferente que antes de Zugarramurdi pero es el mismo con una diferencia: se ha descargado de sus flúidos. Anteayer era sólo grotesco pero ahora es un verdadero gentil hombre. ¿Cuánto le durará? Tal vez un mes o dos." (p.268)

Spic is inconsistent with regard to his own satanism and this inconsistency adds further evidence to our criticisms of him and it. Let me cite two instances. When Spic's research into the history and customs of the Pyrenees had led him to see possible links between his wife's family, tribes in Australia and similar fertility cults practised by his wife's distant ancestors and Australian aborigines with the same name, he did not pursue it because it did not confirm his previously held convictions:

No era que Spic tomara aquellas cosas demasiado gravemente porque, en realidad, no veía manera de hacerlas enlazar con su nigromancia. (p.293)

This is extremely grave for one who considered himself to be a serious scholar and who spent many hours arguing with Cagliostro on the prime importance of diabolism over white magic and the

pre-Christian fertility rituals of which the Italian Count was an adherent. The other case of inconsistency is also seen in Spic's relationship with Cagliostro. Sender had the happy thought of developing - in Las criaturas - the circumstances of Spic's concern with the fatherhood of the child born to Spic's wife after their satanic wedding. Spic had frequently professed veneration and respect for Cagliostro as the Grand Copt,:

"Usted es el gran copto y en nombre de esta misma ortodoxia sólo puedo discutirlo a usted hasta cierto punto." (p.328)

When Cagliostro announced that he was the person who officiated at Spic's marriage ceremony and it was therefore he who was the father of Spic's child, Spic's respect and veneration were put to the test. If we accept Spic's claim that their first duel was fought at the instance of Spic's wife and with the object of determining Cagliostro's invulnerability to bullets and that he was therefore the Grand Copt, and that he felt entirely satisfied with the result of the duel, his subsequent behaviour - the pursuit of Cagliostro, the second duel and the denunciation of Cagliostro to the Inquisition - is not only inconsistent but treacherous. If we do not accept what he said to Cagliostro before and after the duel, which seems more probable, he is untruthful and inconsistent over serious matters of necromancy of which he claims to be an exponent and authority.

Quite independently, Lizaveta came to the same conclusion as Agueda in respect of the general area of Spic's instability. She recognised that it was for reasons of sexual jealousy that he pursued Cagliostro from Spain to Italy:

Sospechaba-que aquel hombre perseguía a Cagliostro por lo que sucedió diez años antes en Zugarramurdi, la noche, de su boda. Por encima de Venus y Satan. aquél era un macho cabrío en celo. (pp.367-368).

Emen hetan left Spic at his point, Las criaturas elaborates and possibly in the odd detail, modifies the character and life of Spic. Cagliostro asserts that Spic had had an illness and had become sterile. It was for that reason that he could be so sure that the child born to Spic's wife was not her husband's. But not only was Spic sterile, there is every indication that he was a victim of periodic impotence. How otherwise is one to interpret the reference to his sword sheath in the following descriptions of him?

Cuando estuvo cerca vieron que la vaina de la espada estaba vacía y se doblaba al andar. (p.205)

Pero (Cagliostro) pensaba en Spic. Desde que leyó la carta de Pilar pensaba siempre en el caballero de Torre Cebrera y lo veía bailando con su máscara y la funda del espadín vacía y oscilando. (p.369)

Igual que en Zugarramurdi llevaba Spic una pequeña capa violeta y la funda de su espadín paralela a las flacas piernas. (p.377)

The only occasion when Spic's red sword sheath is not limp and empty was immediately before Zugarramurdi:

Llevaba botas de montar y un estoque al cinto en su vaina de lujoso cuero rojo. (p.198)

A purely sexual interpretation of Cagliostro's words¹, would seem to fit in with these differing descriptions of Spic's sword sheath. Spic would appear to be a curious sexual anomaly, normally impotent, who somehow gains a degree of sexual gratification through the witches' sabbath. Though further substantiation of the point is perhaps unnecessary, it is nevertheless interesting to note that whereas in Emen hetan Spic had told the rapt Agueda Pilar was his mistress (pp.132-133), in Las criaturas he insisted that Pilar was a virgin and he had no sexual interest in her, p.245. This observation had caused the perspicacious Agueda to smile, presumably

¹See above, p.119.

because she recognised that Spic's respect for Pilar's virginity was quite involuntary.

The life and character of Spic need concern us little more. Perhaps the best general comment passed on him was made by Cagliostro:

"...su satanismo es la consecuencia de su indignación por el hecho de que alguien le haya obligado a salir de la nada donde se encontraba a gusto. La voluptuosidad es lo único que le ofrecen en cambio y no cree que valga la pena. (p.394)

Spic was an unfortunate, overwhelmed by his own existential problems. He was not reconciled to his sad condition and satanism provided him with a means of justifying it: he could say that he encouraged his wife's infidelity, respected Pilar's virginity, and needed to fire a gun at Cagliostro to prove he was invulnerable.

Spic's wife was as badly adjusted to the world and her own past as her husband. She wandered alone through the castle on summer nights crying out to herself as she walked. The basic cause of her evident "desequilibrio" which Lizavéta observed when she first met her (pp.285-286), lay in what had happened to the son born to her after her satanic wedding to Spic. The subject of her cries was this son, who having been thrown into the moat one night had been left dead in a coffin on a glacier:

- Derramaré mi ira sobre los niños, en las calles de Aineto y algunos de ellos, muchos de ellos, tal vez todos ellos, irán también desnudos uno detrás de otro al glaciario de la Maladeta en pequeñas cajas de madera. (p.354)

In the winter the castle of Torre Cebrera was often cut off from the world for months at a time and then in a north-facing, isolated part of the castle, in an ethereal atmosphere produced by the whiteness of the snow, Spic's wife found

distraction in a sexual relationship with her twelve year old page Gil. In the summer, contact with the outside world was renewed, and with the boy free to roam at will and often away, she became conscience stricken about her winter activities.

Spic tried to set her mind at rest but she was not convinced:

¿Era posible que a pesar de lo que había dicho tantas veces su marido la biblia tuviera razón al hablar de la piedra de molino? (pp.336-337)

The death of her son and her relationship with the page were inextricably bound together in her mind for many of the same elements were present in both incidents - sex, the whiteness of the snow, the naked body of a boy and feelings of guilt. Spic's wife was finally unable to distinguish between the one and the other. Thus it was that although Cagliostro's announcement that he had officiated at her Satanic wedding ought logically to have summoned up thoughts of her dead son, it was of Gil whom she thought. Guilt associated with her relationship with Gil underlay her insistence that Spic should fight Cagliostro:

Desde su experiencia primera con el niño se sentía alerta contra una especie de universo de algodón lleno de centinelas blancas. Y por eso - contra toda congruencia aparente - le había sugerido a Spic el duelo. Las centinelas blancas del invierno hacían sonar las trompetas convocadoras del duelo y ella las oía muy bien dentro de su oídos (dentro y no fuera). (p.337)

Spic's wife was unable to come to terms with the death of her son and her relationship with Gil. Her exceedingly odd behaviour was the result. In urging her husband to fight and kill Cagliostro - the man who was responsible for part of her suffering - she sought to expiate her own guilt.

A woman whom Cagliostro saw when travelling one day from Torre Cebreira also appeared to be trying to right past wrongs. She had had some particularly disagreeable experience at some

point and ever after had made strange movements with her hands as though trying to undo her misfortune:

"Se figura que le han quitado sustancias importantes de su vida cuando anduvo por la Francia y así ahora las recoge en el aire y las devuelve a su persona." (p.312)

In the same way that there was no objectively valid, rational link between Spic's wife's wish to have Cagliostro killed and her feelings of guilt in respect of the page and her dead son, so too the hand movements of the woman Cagliostro met would only undo her past wrongs in her own mind. Both of these women sought to readjust to a world that had treated them badly, following an experience of misfortune.

The Orlof who so mistreated Lizaveta while carrying her from Leghorn to Kronshstadt was not quite the unfeeling animal one is tempted to suppose. There was a desperate anguish underlying his wish to rape and dominate Lizaveta, which he revealed to the girl:

- Y este es el momento de decirte - y la voz le temblaba que le deseo y que quiero tenerte en mis brazos, porque yo, Orlof, siempre he tenido en mis brazos las mujeres que he deseado... He hecho el amor centenares de veces, millares de veces sin sentir amor alguno... lo que quiero decir es que el amor sin el amor me va mal a la cabeza, me da jaqueca y catarros nasales. No es un amor completo... Haré el amor contigo y si me enamoro o por lo menos si me va bien a la salud... ¿quién sabe? Puedes tener todavía la gran oportunidad de vivir una vida de perros conmigo. (pp.68-69)

He was clearly no respecter of persons but in some way he sought a physical and perhaps a psychological wholeness¹ in a sincere

¹Sender has often suggested in recent years that sexual desire, psychologically and metaphysically speaking, is an expression of man's sense of alienation and that sexual intercourse is an attempt by each of the lovers to regain a primeval oneness:

Nadie ignora que un día fuimos entidades bisexuales en el mar o cuando nuestros remotísimos abuelos probaban a salir de él como algunos moluscos ahora, que son hermafroditas todavía... Un día fuimos todos al mismo tiempo hembras y varones, muchísimos siglos después de aparecer las células primarias. Pero un día también sucedió un hecho estupendo sobre el que los naturalistas no tienen duda alguna:

love relationship. One cannot help being somewhat scornful of his aspirations to this sincere relationship through rape, though one cannot help but feel a certain pathos for him at the same time. When Lizaveta met Orlof again after her imprisonment, his political situation was much less secure than it had been and he had begun to be consumed by remorse. He admitted that he had suffered misfortune and that it had made him think about religious questions. He tried to conceive of a God who could forgive him:

"...mi Dios es el de los pecados suntuosos, de los crímenes históricos de Estado. El dios que puede comprender y olvidar y tal vez perdonar lo que hicimos contigo, princesa." (p.112)

and in a curious mixture of cynicism and hope he spoke of his own possibilities of salvation with reference to the ruthless and brutal saints, Constantine and Vladimir. The man who had once torn up Cagliostro's letters without reading them (p.74) now had recourse to the Italian count's tricks in order to get dead men's pardons (p.118). He could not sleep at night and he was as insistent as he could be that Lizaveta should give him her pardon, which finally she did. Orlof, then, was another person who in misfortune sought in strange ways to blot out the past and to be at peace with his conscience and the world.

After having witnessed the murder of Radzivil, Dimitri Alexandrovitch lived paralysed by fear and ill-adapted to life

la mujer se nos separó...Desde el día que la mujer se nos separó...el hombre busca a la hembra para reintegrarse en su unidad de origen y la hembra busca al hombre con el mismo fin. El hombre quiere entrar a toda costa por el lugar por donde salió y sólo habiendo entrado alcanza por un instante el gozo de esa reintegración, la mujer penetrada también. (pp.7-8. Tres ejemplos.)

on the farm that had been given to him by Catherine. His profession of liberalism can be seen as being a pathetic attempt to acquire the confidence of the Enlightenment to replace his own that had been irretrievably lost.

The guide Leoncio spent most of his time muttering "frases destempladas" under his breath when he conducted Lizaveta and Cagliostro to Torre Cebreira. Later one wonders quite what his intentions were in giving the page Gil a bear cub. Quite apart from the curses that Spic feared the mother might utter on discovering the cub's disappearance (p.351), surely there was the real danger that the mother might come in search of it. Pilar felt there was something serious undermining and disturbing his equanimity:

"...Leoncio...tiene un reconcomio que le va matando por dentro sin que él mismo lo sepa. Es lo que pasa a veces." (p.332)

The next thing she refers to is Lizaveta's past which implies that Pilar believed the princess' life and the guide's followed similar patterns: past misfortunes led to the odd behaviour of the present.

The simple, rather clownish Perjotín was completely shattered by the death of his daughter. But much to his own consternation his reaction was completely different from what he felt it should have been:

...(su padre) se alegraba sin acabar de entender a qué extraño prodigio respondía aquella monstruosidad...Al mismo tiempo se sentía el ruso culpable de su alegría con los ojos secos y una pálidez enfermiza en la piel. Suspiraba y repetía:

- Ya no soy el que era antes, ya no tengo parientes por quienes guardar alguna clase de decoro ni de respeto. Ya puedo morir como un perro a la orilla del camino. (p.400)

It is significant that following the death of Perjotín's daughter, when Spic, that other most disturbed and unfortunate man, arrives he and the Russian immediately become very good friends.

In addition to the series of strange individual reactions to a hostile reality or experience of suffering which Las criaturas presents, there are also the two collective manifestations of the same phenomenon. I am referring to the witches' sabbath and the means the inhabitants of Croce Vecchia adopte in combating the plague of cholera that is afflicting them.

Like all religious ceremonies, the witches' sabbath was at once a celebration of the power of what the participants conceived of as the Supreme Being - in the case of the satanists Satan - and an attempt to get into some kind of favourable relationship with It. As in Emen hetan, in spite of the absurdity of some of the satanism as presented here, one cannot deny the validity of at least some of the negative criticisms that satanism makes of the Church and conventional morality. The fact that the major participants at the sabbath of whom we know anything, Spic, Agueda and the three lesbians, had had experiences of suffering from which their adherence to satanism could be thought to derive is not essentially a damning criticism of it, but merely an indication that they found Christian ethics and metaphysics inadequate for explaining their experiences of evil and suffering. In this respect the case of Agueda is as eloquent here as it was in Emen hetan. Though the reader is inclined to join with some of the characters of the novel in their criticism of the sabbath, every criticism he expresses

eradicate it. The inadequacy of each of these attempts is repeatedly and cruelly made manifest as the person who suggests a new measure is often the next to succumb to it. Thus the chemist who suggested that thyme should be added to the eucalyptus that was being burnt in great bonfires as a preventive measure died shortly afterwards. Of course neither the bonfires, the daily exorcism of the village, nor the twenty-four hour sessions of music and dancing in the main square had the slightest effect in fighting the disease, but the villagers at least felt they were doing something in their own defence and, ignorant as all were of the true nature of the disease and its causes, there was no one to gainsay them. Although he had some fear of the plague, Spic found things in Croce Vecchia very much to his liking:

El caballero Spic encontraba la atmósfera muy de su gusto y pensaba quedarse algún tiempo. (pp.403-404)

Unconsciously perhaps, he recognised the common features of the collective irrationalism of the villagers of Croce Vecchia and the witches' sabbath of Zugarramurdi.

As we have seen the one person who was able to help Lizaveta understand and, to an extent, come to terms with her past misfortune was Cagliostro. It was also he, amongst all others, whose comments on human psychology were so helpful in enabling us to understand the minds of many of the characters in the book. The key importance of the views and ideas of Cagliostro is thus apparent, and it would appear that Sender intended us to pay particular attention to what Cagliostro says. However, Sender's post-Civil War novels are far from simple and Las criaturas is no exception. There is much in the character of Cagliostro to arouse the reader's suspicion, and I would like to give some attention to this before looking at the count's ideas.

The first problem one meets in assessing the character of Cagliostro is that of extracting the truth from what he says about himself. We learn for example that when required to testify before the Parlement de Paris with regard to the affair of the diamond necklace,

Fue el discurso de Cagliostro una mezcla de verdad y de fantasía. (p.374)

His claim to be a count and what he says to Cardinal Ricci are much of the same character:

"Yo he recibido en herencia el saber de tres nigromantes: Numa Pompilio, Balaam y Salomon. Yo a quien llaman el gran copto de Egipto por haber nacido de mi madre religiosa y de un ángel semítico cuyo nombre no estoy autorizado a revelar. Yo me encuentro en este planeta por error y debo sin embargo aprovechar ese error para hacer el mayor bien posible." (p.11)

as becomes abundantly clear when he later confesses to Lizaveta:

Yo no soy nadie. En mi caso el título de conde es tramoya. Yo nací José Balsamo y no conocí a mi padre. Un bastardo. (p.261)

What one can say in Cagliostro's defence is that the kind of lie he is perpetrating at this point does not seem to be of the kind designed to convince anyone but the most foolish. His lies, perhaps, were more concerned to disconcert and evoke an amused admiration in his interlocutor. Whatever Cagliostro's formula, it does seem to have won him some success prior to his meeting Lizaveta. Thus it was that he had gained some influence at the court of Marie-Antoinette and was involved in the hilarious affair of the diamond necklace. It was Cagliostro who supplied Clement XIV with an antidote that would protect him from being poisoned by the Jesuits and it was Cagliostro who could supply Cardinal Ricci with a confidential report written by the Spanish Ambassador to Charles III of Spain on the subject of the Jesuits. But Cagliostro's moments of success and

influence were numbered, His influence at the French court ended with a period of imprisonment in the Bastille; for all his usefulness to Cardinal Ricci, Cagliostro was never received formally by the latter and in fact spent the last years of his life in prison in Rome in accordance with a sentence signed by the Cardinal himself. Furthermore, Cagliostro had been singularly unable to gain a foothold in Russia or with Catherine and had been trailed by the Russian police while in that country. By the time he came to know Lizaveta, Cagliostro regarded his public, past life as at an end. He looked on it with regret and described it as grotesque (p.375). It was a retired, ageing man who sought solace in the company of Lizaveta:

"Porque a veces...la verdad en que comienzo a estar fatigado. Sólo la presencia de vuestra alteza me ha vivificado realmente en los últimos tiempos. ¿Qué sería de mí sin vuestra compañía?" (p.226)

Perhaps through her, his true value and nature could be communicated to posterity:

"Me halaga la idea de que usted, Lizaveta me conozca a fondo. ¿Sabe por qué? Porque yo he de morir mucho antes que usted, alteza. Y si me sobrevive treinta o cuarenta años usted podrá hablar de me como del verdadero José Balsamo que soy y que nadie ha conocido (sic) ...porque... yo le he abierto mi corazón. Por vez primera en mi vida he confiado a alguien. (p.365)

For Cagliostro did not lie to Lizaveta. He felt instinctively that they had a lot in common:

-Hay algo, que aproxima a usted y a mí. Nos aproxima la falta de fe en todo lo otro. Vuestra alteza mira las cosas desde el otro lado de la vida. Todo es falso y absurdo piensa vuestra alteza. Todo es falso y admirable, digo yo. (p.261)

And the more he found out about her the more he became convinced of it:

Ella conoce mi pasado y yo el suyo. El mío es grotesco y el de ella trágico. Y aquí estamos volviendo a Italia lejos y apartados los dos de la sociedad. (p.375)

In addition to his final public failure, Cagliostro had suffered personal misfortune of particular intensity: he reflected on it after seeing the woman who had been in France:

"Todo lo exterior quiere desintegrarnos y todo dentro de nosotros clama por la reintegración...Hubo un momento en que yo fui especialmente desgraciado. Y quería desnacer. No matarme ni morir, sino desnacer. Ir menguando de tamaño hasta hacerme pequeñito y que me pusieran en panales y seguir disminuyendo hasta desaparecer dentro del útero materno. (pp.312-313)

Although Cagliostro's public life had finally ended in failure, it had given him a unique opportunity of studying human behaviour and political intrigue from within. Personal failure and misfortune complemented the knowledge thus gained, and made him also sensitive to the existential plight of others. In effect retired from public life, without further personal ambition, in the company of the needy and sincere Lizaveta, he had no need of subterfuge or hypocrisy, his energies could be directed towards the cultivation of her friendship, the illumination of her problems and the expression of his ideas, for he loved talking. Thus it is that we should not necessarily dismiss what Cagliostro says on the grounds of his past career as charlatan and mountebank. It can be argued that the retired deceiver is in many ways the best qualified guide to human nature and reality that Lizaveta and the reader could have hoped for. Having said all that, one must add that Sender is insistent that the reader should make his own final assessment of the Italian. The author makes us uncomfortably aware, at times, that Cagliostro shares with Spic some of those features which made us criticise the latter both in Emen hetan and this novel. Thus we sometimes see him nervous and insecure, determined to win the approval of others by whatever means. He wondered, early in their acquaintance whether

to show Lizaveta documents substantiating his claim to an international reputation:

Iba a mostrar papeles que lo atestiguaban, pero le pareció aquello un recurso de charlatán. (p.180)

And he could never resist the opportunity of alluding to Lizaveta's royal blood whenever he introduced her, (see p.198 and p.287). At the witches' sabbath he was the victim of contrary feelings (p.83): he despised the satanists who were taking part in the ceremony yet he would very much have liked to demonstrate to Lizaveta their respect for him as the Grand Copt by uttering the magic formula: "Emen heta an". When he did utter the magic words he suffered the double humiliation of having clearly and voluntarily associated himself with the satanists whom he despised, and going unrecognised by them. The fear is that a man who could be as insecure as this might say things in response to his need for security rather than in accordance with the reality of what he was commenting on. The danger is, of course, very much less pronounced than it was in the case of Spic.

Cagliostro's ideas constitute a radical departure from rationalist and Christian views: he neither believes in the essential goodness nor the essential evil of men; he scorns reason and intellect as aids to human progress and both the validity of conventional concepts of virtue and the pursuit of happiness as a suitable human ideal. He is particularly insistent on the complexity and of the fundamental difficulty of living: he makes no claims to have solved basic epistemological or existential problems. But he also insists that life is miraculous and full of pleasures, and there was much in the nature of reality to make him feel optimistic about the human

condition. But to appreciate and enjoy life one had first to learn to free oneself from the goals and inhibitions of conventional morality. Only with a much more comprehensive and inclusive philosophy than either rationalism or Christianity could one hope to understand the world and adjust to it.

The corner stone of Cagliostro's philosophy is that one should accept reality and human life as they are. Most people, on the basis of a religious upbringing, tend to spurn the here and now in the hope of future redemption or eternal life:

-La pobre gente considera un privilegio eso de la vida eterna y es un error infinitamente e inútilmente corregido por un dios prodigioso y de veras eterno, pero fracasado. Fracasado como dios, digo, y él me perdone. Pobre humanidad soñando con redenciones imposibles: ¿Cuándo aprenderán? (p.226)

In a similar way people aspired to happiness and all that was good, closing their eyes to the fact that unhappiness, misfortune and evil dominated the world:

"La gente aspira a ser feliz, lógicamente, pero la tristeza, la desgracia, el mal son dueños del mundo. ¿Por qué seguir buscando esa felicidad?" (p.174)

"A medida que envejecemos sabemos más de esa realidad adulta y ¿cuándo se ha visto un hombre que diga que esa realidad es buena?" (p.181)

One man, Rousseau, who had propounded the idea of the natural goodness of man had discovered the inadequacy of his grasp of reality within his own life-time and, as Cagliostro explained if he had lived till the time of the French Revolution he would have been further disabused:

"El pobre Rousseau si viviera hoy tendría que cambiar de opinión viendo lo que ha sucedido por culpa de él. Tal vez antes de morir había visto la verdad. Se obstinaba en hablar de la bondad natural del hombre y el hombre lo insultaba por las calles, apedreaba su casa en Suiza. Y no era sólo el hombre civilizado, es decir pervertido por la urbe, porque también el hombre del campo quería matarlo, a Rousseau." (p.176)

Any conception of God, or any characterisation of His creation must take into account what from a conventional point of view appears to be failures or shortcomings. Thus it was that Cagliostro spoke of God as "fracasado" (p.226) and of the "imperfección de su obra" (p.181). Alternatively, one should renounce the possibility of forming an adequate conception of God or of His purposes in the world:

-¿Tiene sentido el universo? Nada de eso es lógico sino desde el plano de la necesidad de Dios que nosotros no alcanzamos. (p.264)

It was idle and fruitless to limit God to one's human conceptions of perfection or to ignore the evident misfortune and unhappiness of the world. Reality and human life¹ were what they were and man should accept them and learn to live with them:

"...la vida está justificada en sí misma y en su horror...y nosotros debemos ser agentes tranquilos, satisfechos y conscientes de ese horror." (p.181)

On another occasion Cagliostro expresses wonder at the phenomenon of human life:

"...una niña caminando hacia la escuela una mañana de marzo sobre la escarcha blanca es un milagro ... Nosotros, acostumbrados a la trivialidad de la superficie de las cosas, no nos damos cuenta porque nuestros ojos nos impiden ver el prodigio de estas cosas." (p.380)

¹In Los noventayochos, Sender goes one stage further, speaking of the perfection of reality:

La vida es ardua, caótica y a veces horrible, pero es deseable en su caos y en su horror. Percibimos al mismo tiempo, recíprocamente condicionadas, la delicia del ser y el espanto de la nada. La sociedad es absurda pero encantadora y el hombre es abyecto, pero la estructura de su abyección toca al milagro... La ciudad tiene horrendas circunstancias sociales, económicas, higiénicas, prácticas. Pero en cada una hay algún ángulo desde el cual vemos soluciones armoniosas los que creemos en la perfección de lo real (con todas las catástrofes incluidas.) (p.34)

The great virtue of Buddhism, according to Cagliostro, lay in its acceptance of the world and human life as they were, with no preconceptions as to their essential natures:

"Buda es el más conformista de los profetas y ¿sabéis lo que hay en el vientre de ese profeta, resumen de la sabiduría humana y divina? Piedad. Una inmensa piedad para los hombres, los animales y las plantas. ¿Qué supone esa piedad? Supone la aceptación de la más triste y negra desgracia." (pp.181-182)

Cagliostro declares that evil is wrongly characterised and wrongly shunned. In practical terms one should have no fear of indulging one's passions¹, i.e. what rationally based concepts of virtue regarded as evil. Such had been Cagliostro's advice to Marie-Antoinette, or so he claimed:

-Y se lo decía tiempos atrás a María-Antoineta: abandónese vuestra majestad a sus propias pasiones sin cuidado, hasta el fin. (p.175)

Those areas of human activity and the human mind, the unconscious, instinct and human intuition, which reason and Christianity sought to reject and control, characterising them as evil, Cagliostro believed should be encouraged and developed. He renamed them accordingly:

¹The repudiation of intelligence and conscious control, with its corollary of the rehabilitation and revaluation of instinct, is a constant theme in Sender's work. It finds its best expression in Carta and "Reflexiones sobre el amor". The following characteristic passages are taken from the second work:

Son muchos los hombres y las mujeres que viven en la armonía de los instintos, conducidos por el laborar consciente y la razón. Por no haber tenido principios religiosos y por no haberse asomado a la cultura - son por lo general obreros y campesinos, algunos analfabetos - a la vieja cultura infestada de espiritualismo, viven en la verdad armoniosa de los instintos, unidos a mujeres de iguales condiciones, mujeres sin ensueños viciosos y sin supersticiones. (p.103)

El instinto tiene su moral y obliga a que se cumpla, bajo severas penas. (p.101)

Recently, a slightly modified version of Carta has been published in Tres ejemplos.

"Yo creo que eso que llaman el mal hay que propiciarlo porque es el bien de la voluntad." (p.182)

Similarly, he renamed rationally-based concepts of virtue "el bien de la inteligencia". Evil and misfortune were productive:

"El mal es la coyuntura para la acción y la catástrofe es la acción desencadenada. De ellas ha venido sin embargo todo lo que hoy está de pie en el mundo."
(pp.183-184)

Cagliostro's favourite prophet was Balaam, and for him the Old Testament story, illustrated the power and practical value of the unconscious. Balaam's ass, it will be recalled, saw the Angel of the Lord in the path before him and turned aside, thus saving his master from certain death:

"...esa burra lo salvó de la muerte. Iba Balaam montado en ella y se dirigía al palacio del rey de Moab cuando el animal se desvió del camino y Balaam le pegó. La burra le preguntó con voz humana: '¿Qué le ha hecho yo, Balaam, y por qué me pegas?' Así comenzó la cosa que acabó por ser nada menos que una victoria del inconsciente de Balaam sobre la providencia." (p.178)

The consequences of the policies of Louis XVI were further confirmation of the power of the unconscious and the need to understand it. The King, a man of reason and good intentions had, in Cagliostro's opinion, made a tremendous mistake in calling the États Généraux:

"Los Estados Generales querían hacer el bien inteligente y ese deseo era una provocación que producía torrentes de sangre. El bien natural está en la voluntad y el instinto, no en la razón...Pero los reyes creían en el bien de la inteligencia y tenían que pagar. Todos los que han creído en lo razonable han pagado desde los antiguos profetas como Jesús vencido por la traición de Judas. Los reyes franceses creían en el bien razonable y acabaron con las cabezas cortadas." (p.177)

Though it was unlikely that the Revolution would have been averted no matter what Louis had done:

"Un acontecimiento como ése...está fuera de la voluntad de los hombres son siglos de circunstancias acumuladas."

(p.175)

The true nature of the French Revolution was revealed in the

novel of Pierre Choderlos de Laclos, Les Liaisons Dangereuses:

instinct, sexuality, evil were the prime moving forces:

"¿Qué es lo primero que nos demuestra este libro?
Lo de siempre. La revolución ha sido hecha por los
hombres de sensualidad exaltada, refinada, disimulada y
poderosa. Así es siempre, señores. Los libertinos
conducen el mundo...La gente que es decapitada estos
días es gente voluptuosa. Los que cortan la cabeza son
también grandes voluptuosos." (P.189)

Evil was also the source of charm and influence. Thus if Louis
XVI had been able to set aside his reasons and his virtue, not
only would he have been better equipped to see the inherent
danger of calling the États Généraux, but also to survive in
the general struggle for existence that, following the termin-
ology of Choderlos de Laclos, Cagliostro described as being
between seducing and being seduced:

"Venimos de las sombras, vamos a las sombras y en ese
pequeño paréntesis de luz nos hacemos visibles.
Entonces podemos hacer una de dos (cosas?): seducir
o ser seducidos. Pero no con la razón. Luis XVI
no tenía virtudes seductoras en absoluto...Sencilla-
mente, porque era honrado. Sólo es seductor el
hombre malo. Bueno ese a quien infantilmente la
gente llama hombre malo." (p.182) (My parenthesis)

All Cagliostro's necromantic powers¹ derive from evil, "el bien

¹Of Cagliostro's claim to specifically necromantic powers little
need be said. I am inclined to regard this as a vestige of
his life as a charlatan, prior to the development of his sincere
relationship with Lizaveta. We see only one example of his
powers: he successfully makes a lamp stop shaking by uttering
the magic formula "Tat tyan asi". The episode is described
perfectly seriously without the slightest room for doubt or
irony. However, if one bears in mind the fact that the
narrator more often than not abstains from making any comment
on events and characters and that the only person, other than
Cagliostro, who was there to witness the event was Lizaveta,
the episode becomes intelligible. All that happened was that
Cagliostro convinced Lizaveta that he stopped the lamp shaking.
Immediately before he had looked into Lizaveta's eyes with
"esa rara intensidad con que miran algunos locos" (p.184) and
of course much later he successfully hypnotised Perjotin,
announcing at the time that although the co-operation of the
subject was desirable he could hypnotise against the subject's
will (p.398).
Cagliostro hypnotised Lizaveta. Presumably Spic was unsuccess-
ful with the magic words (p.349) because he was either ignorant
of hypnotism or no good at it.

de la voluntad":

"Es verdad que puedo invocar espíritus, producir cambios de naturaleza a distancia, adivinar las ideas del prójimo y las intenciones del enemigo y presentir a veces el futuro. No son tareas del intelecto sino de la voluntad." (p.261)

Underlying Cagliostro's concern to revalue and rehabilitate the more unpopular component of the basic dichotomies of Western Civilisation, viz. evil, unhappiness, misfortune, the unconscious, instinct, intuition, was belief in a very long supportive tradition. Primitive religion did not know the principle of negation so powerful in both rationalism and Christianity and against which Cagliostro inveighed:

"...la magia y el sentido de lo sobrenatural venían de los orígenes más remotos - del bajo neolítico - y tenía bases racionales y ningún propósito de negación ni de oposición. Desarrollaban los hombres poderes naturales en la dirección de lo sobrenatural, siempre afirmativos." (pp.262-263)

Primitive man was concerned with fertility and through fertility the conquering of death; the means he employed were designed to effect a synthesis or promote a harmony between opposing forces or elements. In the "graal", a kind of chalice that had been found in Torre Cebreira, Cagliostro saw a symbol reminiscent of the preoccupations of primitive religion:

Aquel símbolo - pensaba Cagliostro - unía a los hombres del siglo XVIII con los primeros pobladores de las cavernas cuya principal preocupación era hallar una síntesis entre la vida y la muerte y entre la sombra y la luz. Creían haberla encontrado cuando descubrieron el fuego y trataban de articularla con el mito de la olla ardiente y las danzas en círculo. El Graal era la última reminiscencia histórica de todo aquello. (p.300)

Like Spic, Cagliostro was interested in investigating and substantiating his ideas with reference to historical documents and primitive local customs, but unlike Spiche did not find evidence to contradict what he thought. Furthermore, his attitude to research was much more businesslike and professional than the Spaniards. He realised he would only reach conclusions after long and painstaking work.

...decidió que necesitaría vivir años enteros en aquellas alturas para comenzar a deslindar la magia blanca primitiva (la de las brujas hermosas) de la magia negra, es decir de la que cultivaba Spic en la cual las brujas volaban en un palo de escoba. (p.299)

The difference between white and black magic was an important one and one of the things that lay at the heart of the disagreements between Spic and Cagliostro. Cagliostro maintained that the kind of ritual Spic was interested in was imitative and derivative¹; it came ultimately from primitive fertility rites like those associated with the "graal" but its character had been greatly influenced by the opposition of the Church:

"De algunos de esos ritos nuestros han sacado los supersticiosos como Spic la necesidad de la misa negra. Pero es absurdo. Esa misa no es sino una sucesión de blasfemias católicas." (p.268)

H.T.F.Rhodes in his study The Satanic Mass makes almost precisely the same distinction:

...the sabbath provides the link between the old pagan rite of the witches and its anti-Christian end product wherein a deified Satan, the adversary of the Christian God, was worshipped with the perverted Christian rites and ceremonies. Only this can be called the true Black Mass. The Sabbat... caused no Christian symbolism or ceremonies. Pagan idols presided in high places. Phallic symbols are prominent, and priest and priestess alike adore them. (p.51)

The relatively short history of satanism, in Cagliostro's eyes, limited its importance, furthermore there was the more important objection that it was philosophically limited and exclusive.

For Spic, the Devil and evil were the source of all that was sublime, as he explained with reference to Spain:

(España)...es la tierra sin esperanza. ¿No es sublime? Tierra fea, hombres feos, pero con la fatalidad llevan implícita la sublimidad y esa sublimidad les viene del Tenebro. (p.217)

¹Carrasquer makes the odd, erroneous suggestion that Spic's magic was older than Cagliostro's:

...tesis y antítesis están encarnadas en Spic y Cagliostro; en España o magia antediluviana y Europa o magia postdiluviana; en magia negra y magia blanca... (op.cit., p.234)

For Cagliostro, the Devil and evil were no more than parts of God's creation:

El mismo baal (Baalzebuth) es obra de Dios. (p.328)
(My parenthesis)

One other important component of Cagliostro's philosophy was his respect for mystery:

Cagliostro volvió a hablar...diciendo que sólo en oriente se tiene sentido del misterio y que en los países europeos todo el mundo trata de aturdirse con cosas triviales.
(p.172)

Such a feature is a positive element in any philosophy for it acts as a kind of safety-valve or insurance against dogmatism: Cagliostro accepted that there would be things that he and his philosophy could not explain. However, Cagliostro was by no means an enemy of common sense. Whereas Spic thought in terms of the supernatural to explain the strange sounds that could be heard in Torre Cebreira at night and why Cagliostro had not been killed by any of the three bullets fired at him.

Cagliostro thought of squirrels and a bad aim!

The amount of space given to Cagliostro's views in Las criaturas clearly established their importance in the novel. Cagliostro's philosophy is not however an easy one to evaluate. There are a number of areas of obscurity in what he says and the reader is not immediately aware of what criteria to apply. A cardinal, positive feature is undoubtedly the fact that Cagliostro's philosophy is life-affirming. In spite of his acute awareness of all the disagreeable aspects of existence, Cagliostro has a passionate belief in the value of living¹: and

¹The attitude of the Ramón Sender who appears as a character in the third volume of Crónica is somewhat similar, as he confides to Pepe Garcés when they were both in a situation of physical danger:
Para a pesar del vacío absoluto, la vida conserva sus valores intactos...Tú ahí, y yo aquí estamos vivos y gozamos aún del aire que respiramos como de un licor precioso.
(pp.328-329)

in this he stands in contrast to a number of the other characters of the book amongst them Lizaveta who despair at life and their own ability to understand it or adjust to it. It is indeed in respect of Lizaveta that the principal value of Cagliostro's philosophy can be seen. Lizaveta's Christian philosophy of life collapsed under the strain of trying to understand her misfortune and it was Cagliostro and his ideas, as we have seen, that enabled her to begin to understand what had happened to her and place it within a more inclusive and comprehensive conception of reality. In the improbable friendship itself - between a Russian princess and a mountebank - that developed between her and Cagliostro, which she had both looked down on and welcomed (p.384) she had made a decided step forward in her adjustment to reality, almost in spite of herself, but it was Cagliostro's words that helped most of all. Though for most of the time Cagliostro knew nothing at all of her misfortune, when he inveighed against reason and Christianity stressing the importance of the unconscious, the complexity of reality and the difficulty of living, she found much that confirmed the insights her imprisonment in Peter and Paul had given her. The inconsistency of Cagliostro in his conceptions of God and the relative incompatibility of those conceptions - he spoke of God as a failure (p.226), of God as unknowable (p.264) and of God being neither good nor evil (p.188) - are of minor importance in comparison with the general liberating effect of all those conceptions on a mind which had believed in the unchallenged power of good and reason. Part of the difficulty, we suggested, of Lizaveta's understanding and adjusting to her experiences of suffering was that her philosophy could not accommodate so much undeserved misfortune. One virtue, therefore, of Cagliostro's philosophy is that it could eliminate that.

particular difficulty. A disciple of Cagliostro would not be surprised by misfortune. In this sense Cagliostro's philosophy does seem to constitute an advance on the kind of reason and

Christianity Lizaveta held to when she was abducted from Leghorn.

Bearing in mind Cagliostro's lack of dogmatism, his acceptance of mystery and the incapacity of man to grasp the designs and nature of God, perhaps one should demand no more of his philosophy than he would presumably himself, viz. an amendment and improvement in respect of contemporary philosophies, in the general direction of a fuller and more inclusive understanding of life and reality. As such, it would seem to exemplify the process Sender calls "infringimiento". He explains it in

the introduction to his Ensayos sobre el infringimiento cristiano:

Se trata de ese infringimiento por el cual la ciencia y la filosofía se acercan a alguna verdad más o menos total y aciertan o no partiendo, como se ha hecho siempre, de una asunción probable aun a riesgo del error.

El infringimiento lo es de la verdad total anterior, que ignoramos o la ley establecida que no conocemos y a la que tratamos de acercarnos tanteando como los ciegos. Ese infringimiento a priori es el primer peldaño inevitable para seguir adelante. (pp.6-7)

The uncertainty and doubt which inevitably accompany any step of "infringimiento¹" - along with the evident need for it deriving from a sense of an inadequacy of which it is an expression -

Sender conveys to us in the case of Cagliostro's philosophy by allowing us to see its shortcomings as well as its evident virtues. Further to the suspicions that Sender raises in the reader's mind in respect of Cagliostro's ideas by putting them

¹Cagliostro's philosophy can be regarded as an "infringimiento" in respect of Spic's.

in the mouth of a man with such a chequered past, there are two further reasons which make us think twice about the final value of what he says. The first is the fact that although he relates his thought to pre-Christian rituals which do not negate evil or the unconscious, and although, like Federico Salla¹ he saw God as being above human concepts, of good and evil, Cagliostro gives the impression that he takes an active pleasure in evil. One notes, for example, the pleasure with which he spoke of the inevitability of the French Revolution:

"Un acontecimiento como ése... - y sonreía con cierta voluptuosidad - está fuera de la voluntad de los hombres. Son siglos de circunstancias acumuladas." (p.175)

This is a serious defect in a man who criticised Spic for the limitations and exclusiveness of a philosophy devoted to evil and the Devil. Another curious shortcoming in Cagliostro is the fact that he, who was so insistent on the importance of the unconscious and its influence on human behaviour, and is so perceptive in detecting its workings not least in Lizaveta, should have been so surprised by the continued reverence of Lizaveta for Cardinal Ricci:

-¿Qué clase de persona es usted que todavía puede creer en las palabras de monseñor Ricci? (p.393)

Las criaturas loses nothing in ambiguity and irony in comparison with Emen hetan. If a limited respect had to be accorded Spic in the earlier work for some of his attacks on Christianity and conventional morality, and if we had to acknowledge that satanism could provide Agueda help in facing serious

¹According to Salla in La esfera God might well say one day to mankind:

Eso de la virtud y el crimen, el bien y el mal, es un juego que va siendo aburrido. Inventad lo contrario, y no habrá más crímenes ni actos edificantes que ahora. Yo no entro en eso. (p.244)

personal and philosophical problems, Las criaturas is not left behind. There are stronger grounds for both accepting and rejecting the views of Spic's counterpart Cagliostro. He has extremely clear and perceptive things to say in criticism of satanism, Christianity and reason, he is an intelligent observer of human nature and one feels accurately articulates the central human problems of understanding reality and adjusting to it, yet at the same time he is Cagliostro, a notorious charlatan and mountebank, and one can have no doubt that Sender's reason for choosing this particular historical figure to serve as Lizaveta's mentor, was designed to ensure the reader's - at least initial - suspicion and scepticism of him. If anything could be calculated to oblige the reader to accept the difficulty of understanding reality and the ease with which one can slip into ill-considered assumptions - Cagliostro's constant themes - nothing could achieve its object more successfully than making the notorious Cagliostro the mouthpiece of so much good sense and truth. The complexity is compounded by suggestions that some of the things Cagliostro says may have less validity and that he may at times be inconsistent.

Las criaturas develops and elaborates most cleverly Emen hetan's concern to show the relationship between a man's psychology and his philosophy. Whereas the earlier work gave scant attention to more than two cases and limited itself to a single clearly articulated philosophy, Las criaturas multiplies examples and considers a considerable range of attempts to control and understand reality, from the highly sophisticated thoughts of Cagliostro to the involuntary hand movements of a poor peasant woman. The case of Lizaveta is paradigmatic: her faith in reason and Christian Providence broke down under her appalling

experiences of rape and imprisonment. Thereafter she needed a new philosophy that could help her to understand the world that had so mistróated her. Las criaturas describes her search and suggests the universality of her general problem.

I would suggest that Sender's particular interest in these topics of the collapse of values following an experience of suffering and of the general problem of adjustment to the new face of reality revealed through the suffering, reflect his own crisis of values at the time of the Spanish Civil War and his own search for orientation subsequently. The irony and ambiguity of this and other novels and the deliberate avoidance of the presentation of clear solutions, suggest that Sender feels that the problems raised are not susceptible to easy solutions, and that at best, the help that can be given by a guide - or novelist - is limited.

CHAPTER V

Crónica del alba

Like The Affable Hangman, Emen hetan and Las criaturas, Crónica is interesting from a philosophical and psychological point of view and is both complex and ambiguous. Its major themes - the nature of reality and how a man should understand and live with it - too, ally it with important novels that Sender has written since the Spanish Civil War. The material of Crónica is more strongly autobiographical in character than that of any other of Sender's fictions, including The Affable Hangman, but, as I hope to show, this does not merit its consideration in a special category. Any insights into Sender's life and thought offered by Crónica must be garnered as from Sender's less autobiographical, fictional works, through the fiction, complexity and ambiguity of the artifice, which are of paramount importance.

Crónica is a work which the reader is encouraged to see as a reflection of the author: the main character, Pepe Garcés, is given the author's second Christian name and second surname; when Ramón Sender appears as a character (Vol.III) he insists on his close similarity to Pepe; and Sender, on several occasions¹, has been quite explicit on the links between the novel and his own life. As such, Crónica is a singularly appropriate work for analysis within this thesis. Concerned as

¹See J. Rivas, op.cit., p.8 and ff. and footnotes.

it is to examine the philosophical and psychological problems of adjustment of a young man, perhaps the alter-ego of the author, to the reality of Spain of the 1920s and 1930s, including the Civil War, perhaps it might be able to confirm my tentative suggestion that such themes, even in a novel with so different a setting as Las criaturas were to a significant extent the product of Sender's own problems of adjustment both in the war and subsequently. The body of evidence that could be apported by Crónica would be considerable for, written over a period of some twenty-four years¹, it can also therefore be considered as a highly significant indication of Sender's post-Civil War attitude and likely to show whether the theme of the problems of psychological and philosophical adjustment to reality is indeed of the importance to Sender that I have suggested.

As in The Affable Hangman the form of Crónica is very important with regard to the ambiguity and meaning of the work. The nine notebooks of Pepe Garcés describe his life from his - first person - point of view. There is a framework to the nine notebooks, and it is true that the unnamed editor and collector of Pepe's manuscripts does tell us a little about him - he was a prisoner in Argeles and committed suicide after the fall of Madrid and Valencia-but this information does little more than situate Pepe Garcés in a very general way. The first person perspective of the narrator - usually that of Pepe the actor, with occasional interventions by the adult - dominates and, from the point of view of an evaluation and assessment of him, is elusive and mysterious. The persistent and ever-growing concern of Pepe to ask philosophical and moral questions, provokes a desire and need in the reader to evaluate him.

¹The very first part was published in 1942: Crónica del alba (Mexico). The last volume of the first complete version of the series was published in 1966.

Naturally identifying to a degree with the first person narrator/actor, the reader follows Pepe Garcés in his self-doubts and self-questioning: the reader like him wonders if indeed the cruelty of his father to him as a child had an overwhelming, determining effect on his attitudes and psychology, and shares the doubts and existential anguish of Pepe when defining himself and his life through his decisions. The reader's own uncertainties in part derive from Pepe's own. Through the options Pepe rejects and through the doubts about himself that Pepe expresses, the reader can develop criteria on the basis of which Pepe can be judged. But these criteria will basically be the reader's own, and in devising them and in making judgments the reader is made to live vicariously Pepe Garcés' own existential dilemmas.

The central ambiguity of Crónica is in no way attenuated by the autobiographical character of the work. The reader is tempted to think that an evaluation of Pepe Garcés could be made on the basis of a comparison between his life and ideas and those of the author. But while such a comparison is illuminating, and I will have frequent recourse to it, in so far as it clarifies major points of agreement and dispute between the two men, the evaluation question remains completely open. The long and important scene describing the meeting between Pepe and Ramón Sender, as a character, in which the human weaknesses and strengths of both men are made clear, reinforces this openness and ambiguity quite incontrovertibly. Since 1939 especially, Sender has been an existentially preoccupied novelist who sees life and morality as a source of questions and doubts rather than certainties, and his major novels, including Crónica, faithfully reflect that vision.

As might be expected of a work written over such an extensive period of time, the character of Crónica changes as it progresses. This change undoubtedly corresponds to a change in the author's intentions, for which there is external evidence¹. However, long and complex as the novel is and though at least one important criticism can be made of its structure², it achieves an astonishing unity throughout its one thousand, four hundred or so pages.

It may well be that in his exile in Mexico in the early 1940s, Sender frequently found himself tempted to indulge in escapist nostalgia as a defence against his recent memories and the reality of his present. Certainly, this would help explain the inspiration of the early novels of Crónica. But the author who could in that period write El lugar del hombre³ and Epitalamio del prieto Trinidad³ was clearly unlikely to write a work of unqualified escapist nostalgia, and Crónica is not one. What it is at its outset is an account of a man who in an extreme situation sought solace and support in his memories of childhood; as the manuscript collector explains:

(Pepe) Se entregó en seguida a los recuerdos. Era como si en lugar de seguir viviendo hacia adelante, se pusiera a retroceder. Cada hallazgo de personas, hechos o cosas conocidas le llenaba de gozo. (p.15, Vol.I)

Quite what Pepe Garcés had done to the material of his past

¹See Peñuelas, Conversaciones, p.162: Sender admits to having planned a three novel trilogy.

²It could be argued that memoirs, which make the past one and contemporaneous with the present, are not the ideal form for showing changes and development in the past. Sender resolves the problem in part by having the thoughts and feelings of the narrator in Argelés change parallelly to those of the protagonist, and by placing most of the narrative in the mouth of the young Pepe.

³Epitalamio del prieto Trinidad (Mexico, 1942).

to make it fulfil this psychological need is not initially apparent. In fact the editor insists in the prefaces to the first and second novels (pp.11 and 145, Vol.I) that a surprising objectivity informed Pepe's account. It is not until the preface of the sixth notebook, Los niveles del existir¹, and in particular the first page of the eighth, La orilla donde los locos sonríen¹, that we are told that Pepe idealised the account of his childhood. The early section of La vida comienza ahora¹ sets the record straight when Pepe explains his father's appalling brutality and cruelty and how this had affected the boy. The greater concern for unidealised truth that characterises the later notebooks corresponds in part to the material of which they are composed - as Pepe's life progressed it became more and more difficult to eliminate everything that interfered with an idealised conception of it - and in part to a different intention on behalf of the narrator (p.327 Vol.III).

Pepe makes the material of his early life fulfil a psychological need for escape by glossing over or omitting what was unpleasant. The first novels are not untrue (p.265 Vol.III) in the sense that the facts or details are false. "If there is any falsity it lies in the general mood or atmosphere which is much more light-hearted, happy and problem-free than, as La vida explains, it was in reality. Now since Pepe Garcés is not a novelist but a character in a novel whose account of early childhood is made to serve the dual function of telling us about what he did and thought as a small boy as well as revealing to us aspects of his psychology as an adult, we accept

¹Hereinafter referred to respectively as Los niveles, La orilla and La vida.

him and his notebooks as they are. From a morally pre-occupied novelist such as Sender, a reader could not accept a work which manifestly fulfilled the author's psychological, escapist needs. In Crónica Sender avoids the undoubted problem in two ways. First, by juxtaposing an account of Pepe Garcés' suicide and situation of writing about his early childhood with his idealised account of that childhood. Any tendency to present only part of reality in the early notebooks is thus offset by the account of the prison camp and the suicide. In the later notebooks Sender ensures that Crónica is not escapist both through the elimination of the idealisation in Pepe's notebooks and by encouraging the reader to view Pepe and the psychology of idealisation critically. Thus though undoubtedly escapism in Sender helped inspire Crónica it can quite usefully be regarded as a critical study of escapism and perhaps its writing helped purge the author of the tendency to escapism. Quite how the different parts of Crónica are related to Sender's life in exile in default of exact biographical information¹ must be a matter of speculation. As such I offer the following suggestions. If escapism was the inspiration for the early novels of Crónica, the later ones - particularly those of Vol.III which cover the period of the Civil War - could only have been written very much later when memories of the Civil War were less fresh. The first novel Sender wrote in which the Civil War occupies a significant place is The Affable Hangman (1954). This was then to be followed by Ariadna², Los cinco libros and Crónica Vol.III. Perhaps before 1954, Sender felt he was too close to the Civil War to dedicate such attention to it in a novel. Thus there

¹See King, op.cit., pp.13-14.

²Ariadna (Mexico, 1955).

would appear to be a further parallel between Pepe Garcés and the author. Only with the passing of time was Pepe Garcés in the prison camp of Argelés able to overcome his initial tendency to escapism and write about the most important events of his recent life, i.e. the Civil War.

Crónica del alba (the first novel)¹

The interest of the first notebook lies in Pepe's formation and development of an identity and an idea of himself in the face of, and in opposition to, his father, the adult world and objective reality. In part what happens to Pepe can be considered a normal process of growing up. He is ten years old, beginning to know psychological and mental independence of his parents, yet frustrated because of the limitations his ten years impose upon him. What complicates what would otherwise be an unexceptional account of childhood development is the fact that the major authority figure in Pepe's life at this stage, is a singularly unjust and stupid man. The boy

¹At one stage Sender considered changing the title of the whole series of novels to La jornada (see Los cinco libros p.xiv) though later he desisted. Setting aside the obvious publicity value of linking the title of the series to the first novel which has, from the first, been very popular, I would suggest that Sender kept the common title both with the object of stressing the importance of the first novel and of insisting on the ambivalence of the whole work. The dawn of a day is the time of greatest hope and future promise. Idealism and generosity are associated easily with the concept of a dawn. These associations are clearly relevant to the Pepe of the first notebook and explain its title. But the value of the whole of Pepe's life, like the value of the whole day of which the dawn is no more than a beginning, will lie in the extent to which it lives up to its early future promise. The title of the series, like the series itself, poses an implicit question. Neither the one nor the other answers it.

knows for example that the tirade of abuse his father directs at him (p.24, Vol.I) is unreasonable and excessive. Yet such a man was and would remain in authority over the boy. Pepe's image of himself was developed to defend himself and compensate for his father's withering assessment.

Valentina's implicit faith in Pepe was extremely important in the elaboration of his self-image. This pretty girl, who in the minds of both adults and children, seemed the incarnation¹ of the Catholic concepts of virtue and innocence accepted without

¹Comments that Sender has made on the problems children experience in attempting to understand abstract notions, help explain something of the moral significance of Valentina to the young Pepe. The following quotation is taken from Tres ejemplos and presents in a shortened form what Sender first expressed in Carta. Writing to a Spanish girl, Sender says:

Al niño no se le puede hablar en abstracto sino por imágenes. Le falta el hábito de la reflexión. A ti misma y a los que comparten tu ambiente han tratado de haceros comprender la eternidad a través de ejemplos y parábolas. No es tan fácil, porque para hablarle al niño hay que apoyarse en instintos poderosos y ciegos. Nada más ajeno a la naturaleza instintiva que la noción de eternidad. Eso de querer meterles en la cabeza esa noción en edad tan tierna es desatinado y cruel. Recordemos los esfuerzos de algunos que en su infancia trataban de alcanzarla. Teresa de Jesús cuenta que cuando tenía doce años se detenía a pensar en la eternidad muy a menudo. Trataba de comprenderla cerrando los ojos - según sus preciosas palabras - y repitiendo varias veces: "siempre, siempre, siempre"...esto llegaba a conmoverla, y en esa emoción percibía - intuía casi sensualmente - la eternidad. Eso de alcanzar la percepción de lo eterno antes de llegar, en muchos casos, a la noción abstracta del tiempo, que es lo contrario, es de veras inadecuado. Pero si además, se llega a sentir, como en el caso de Teresa de Jesús, la emoción de lo eterno, se ha creado ya en el individuo una facultad de abstracción no intelectual, sino emotiva y alienadora que le hará navegar en el ensueño toda la vida. Todo esto nace con las nociones de lo bueno y lo malo con su traducción religiosa del bien y del mal. Lo bueno y lo malo tienen en los niños imágenes claras en el sabor dulce o amargo de los alimentos, en lo que causa placer o dolor físicos. En cuanto al bien y el mal, son conceptos. Hay que presentarlos con imágenes fáciles: una imagen de belleza, el ángel. Otra de fealdad y de el demonio (p252-3)

See below for the further relevance of these comments to Pepe's attempts at understanding. For the critical note they contain see below p.189 footnote 2).

questioning everything that Pepe said or did. Here was the objective endorsement of what Pepe wanted to be. The immediate pleasures of the here and now, in secret conversations with Valentina, seemed a foretaste of what might be in some future, ideal world which Pepe saw on the irregular surface of a rough table-cloth viewed through binoculars:

Entre los gruesos nudos de tejido que parecían colinas y montañas, había toda una vegetación. Hierbas, arbustos, árboles. La hierba era a veces azul o roja y los árboles malva. Cualquier sombra podía ser completada con la imaginación... dotándola de piernas y brazos y animada, atribuyéndole una intención... Yo hubiera querido estar sentado allí al pie de una de las colinas rojas bajo un árbol malva, esperando a Valentina. Y que ella llegara libre de sus padres y de los planos fatigosos, instrumentos de tortura, negros como ataúdes. Yo encontraría un arroyo donde beber cuando tuviéramos sed, y miel de colmena y manzanas... Pero yo me alejaba con Valentina, y cogidos de la cintura repetimos las Voces del Alma Enamorada. (pp.75-76, Vol.I)

Valentina was the bridge to an ideal world, completely separate from, and independent of, adults where the limitations of being ten years old and the criticisms of Pepe's father had no place.

Almost everything was grist for the mill of Pepe's imagination in the elaboration of his self-image: the Bible, the prayer book, fiction and the odd bit of history. All that was required was that the material could be used to affirm Pepe's importance, his independence of his parents and ideally an attitude of rebellion in respect of his father¹. Heroism was thus a useful concept because, as here, Pepe would be important, independent of others and likely to be successful in any contest with his father. Knowledge was a field where Pepe could hope to be both important and independent. His father read little (p.35 Vol.I)

¹Sender's own rebelliousness in respect of his father is an attested fact (see King, *op.cit.*, p.16 and ff.) and has been the subject of a psychological study, see above p.3.

so there was hope too of showing him up. And love stood for that independent world in which Pepe could be alone with Valentina. It was thus understandable that Pepe should see in a line from the prayer books' Voces de Dios al alma enamorada - "¡Oh, Señor del amor, del saber y de las dominaciones!" (p.49 Vol.I) - the fullest statement to date of the attributes he wished to possess. The authority of the prayer book and the fact that it was Valentina who first read the line, addressing it to him, helped Pepe to take the first step, in his own mind, in transforming wish into reality. There were difficulties, but following the triumph in the battle with the boys from the neighbouring village and Pepe's examinations' success in Zaragoza, Pepe felt he had overcome them.

An important aspect of Pepe's psychology at this time was his ability to disarm and nullify any criticism or limitations he came across. The story of the shepherd (pp.104-105, Vol.I) and the parchment found in the underground passage introduced to Pepe's notions of heroism the concepts of self-sacrifice and death. These concepts were beyond Pepe's powers of understanding, but he was sensitive to the glory with which they were often associated. Thus his hallucinations in the subterranean were made to contain the concepts - a poet, a hero and a saint who had been treacherously murdered appeared to him - but in the final analysis they were not fearful.

...yo me sentía tan poderoso que nada podía impresionarme.
(p.129, Vol.I)

And very significantly, after the last ghost disappeared, what made Pepe flee was not the prospect of seeing more ghosts of murdered men nor even executioners, but the threatened return to reality represented by the appearance of his father, mosén

Joaquín and don Arturo. Within the hallucination, the limiting reality of self-sacrifice and death had been eliminated.

The real threat to the hallucination and Pepe's self-image came from reality, not from its disarmed presentation within the hallucination. Afterwards the concept of a heroic death

became part of what were Pepe's desired goals: "Mi destino de héroe y de poeta era morir..." (p.134, Vol.I). The manner of

Pepe's death would of course reflect Pepe's own worth - he

emphatically rejected the possibility of dying at the hands of

Carrasco. (p.134, Vol.I) - and the boy's reflections on the statue of Prim,

...yo creía que la gloria humana consistía en ser muerto a tiros y tener después una estatua en una plazuela de adoquín mojado por la lluvia. (p.225, Vol.I)

indicate quite clearly that he felt he would be there to enjoy the glory following his death. Certainly the glory of being a dead hero, splendidly manifest in the illuminations with which Reus celebrated the anniversary of Constantine the Great, validated the ideal in the here and now, and Pepe was able to think of his own heroic death whilst stroking the smooth, cool sheet on his bed. His cup was indeed full when, having incorporated the Christian concept of Christ's sacrifice on the cross into

his ideal of heroism, he felt he had finally grasped the difficult idea of the holocaust which he had first come across when reading the Voces de Dios al alma enamorada:

La ciudad parecía engalonada por las fiestas del centenario de Constantino el Grande.

Volví a mi celda y me acosté, dejando la ventana abierta.

Se me perdía el horizonte en un juego de maravillas y frente a mi ventana precisamente, en lo alto, aislada, una cruz despertaba antiguos sentimientos.

- Verdaderamente - me decía - In hoc signo vinces.

Me acordé de mis aventuras del castillo. Yo era héroe y a los héroes los mataban. Yo era poeta y a los poetas los mataban. A los santos los sacrificaban también. Quizás a Constantino el Grande lo habían matado en un subterráneo oscuro.

¿Me matarían a mí? Acaricié la sábana cuya vuelta estaba fresca y suave, y mirando una vez más la noche elevándose en luminarias hacia un cielo que me parecía nuevo y recién estrenado me dije con una gran firmeza en el corazón: "Aunque me maten, ¿qué? Yo comprendo el holocausto. Le escribiré a mosén Joaquín." (p.142 Vol.I)

Yet the limitations and criticisms Pepe side stepped were real limitations and valid criticisms. The concepts that inflated his ego and gave him a feeling of his own importance were serious ones as the situation of the adult narrator makes clear. Furthermore, our awareness that so much of Pepe's childhood happiness and pleasure deriving from his triumphs were based on ignorance and good fortune - the demonstration of the insignificance of the gun of Valentina's cousin, the fight with the boys of the neighbouring village and the exploration of the underground passage could so easily have ended in disaster - ensures that the happiness is seen to be exceedingly fragile and ephemeral. Only a superficial reading can allow the first novel of Crónica to be seen as an escapist story of childhood. One is aware at every stage that intense desperation and frustration inform Pepe's elaboration of an image for himself (see p.34, Vol.I: Pepe's reaction to the prospect of Valentina being told of his beating) and how misunderstood concepts on which his triumphs are based, are related to horrors in the adult world which as an adult he will be forced to know. In saying this I have no wish to minimise the pleasures and satisfaction that Pepe's triumphs afford the boy, nor the amusement and delight that they provide the reader.

The first notebook of Crónica encourages the reader to perceive a parallel between the boy and the adult. Both are shown seeking escape from the here and now: the adult does so by reflecting on his childhood, the boy by imagining an ideal world where things are as he would like them to be. Though

in a boy this is an innocent enough pastime, the fact that an adult should indulge in it, and more particularly that the adult should draw pleasure and delight from the boy's childish triumphs, allows the embryo of a suspicion to be formed in the mind of the reader that he might have discovered a failing in the older Pepe. On the other hand, this account of the early childhood of Pepe has the effect of humanising the figure of the adult suicide. The inherent existential pathos of any suicide, in so far as it represents an absolute rejection of future hope or action, is increased by this reminder of the period in the suicide's life which was synonymous with future promise and hope.

Hipogrifo violento¹

Hipogrifo violento adds nothing to our understanding of Pepe's psychology but clarifies the lines of his basic character as we see him moving and reacting in the protected world of his Catholic boarding school in Reus².

If the boy's rebelliousness at home was directed in the first instance against his father and then by extension against all others who limited his independence and his unimpeded enjoyment of it - mosén Joaquín who learned the value of treating the boy more or less as an equal, the doctor who reacted to his father's fussiness and called the boy a hero, and the shepherd who told him stories, were all respected -, at school, within an atmosphere of firm discipline, it was directed against any obvious manifestation of authority. Father Ferrer, the priest in charge of discipline, virtually replaced Pepe's father as the object of hate. Similarly, almost anything the school authorities looked down on, feared or hated, became objects for Pepe's veneration. Thus the lay brother who occupied the most

¹Like the titles to all Pepe Garcés' notebooks, this was chosen by the editor of the manuscripts who thought it appropriate for Pepe's character and as an indication of the "trascender poético" (p.146, Vol.I) of the book so reminiscent of Calderón's play of which it is the first phrase. To this one might add that Rosaura, who had been riding the hippogriff, thought that its behaviour and character were in tune with the inhospitable bare mountain where it had bolted. Among the "brutos" that lived there, of course, was the still wild Segismundo. A parallel between the young Pepe and Segismundo at the beginning of La vida es sueño would thus seem clearly implied. But whereas one might be tempted to conclude an implicit criticism of Pepe, it should not be forgotten that the responsibility for Segismundo's wildness lay wholly with his father and that in the end thanks to his experiences in the cave he was to become a much wiser man and much more spiritually aware than ever his father had been. That possibility is clearly open to Pepe Garcés too.

²King both confirms that Sender attended the convent school in Reus during the academic year 1913-14 and that in the course of it the family moved from Tauste to Zaragoza, op.cit., p.17.)

subordinate position in the school exercised the greatest moral authority over the boy. Anarchism and the possibility of the sack of the convent school were motives for rejoicing, and the hated names of Rousseau and Voltaire automatically endowed with considerable importance. Pepe was not alone in his rebelliousness which was fed by the sympathies of other pupils, and it is important to remember both this and Pepe's affection for individual priests when considering the boy's psychology.

At school Pepe had further motives for trying to bolster up his image of himself than he did at home. Not only did he have loneliness and an atmosphere of firm discipline to contend with, but also the potential rivalry of older boys whom he had to treat with circumspection, and above all, total separation from Valentina. Things became particularly desperate for him at Christmas time, which unlike most of his companions he had to spend at school, and it is significant that his most elaborate defence mechanisms came into operation at this time.

The rehearsals and performance of La vida es sueño occupied Pepe's attention during the early part of the first term and helped overcome his first feelings of estrangement. As main actor, Pepe was important and the object of a lot of attention. Furthermore, Segismundo's successful rebellion against his father and the final public acclamation of the valour and moral worth of a hitherto despised and persecuted son, were paradigms the potential relevance of which Pepe was not slow to appreciate or communicate to Valentina by letter (p.175, Vol.I). The distinction between representation and reality was a confusing one for the boy, and it was not made easier by his interpretation of the play:

Bastaba con pensar que la vida es sueño para que se acabaran las dificultades en la vida. (p.175, Vol.1)

That much blood would be spilt in the possible sack of the convent school by striking workers was clearly indicated by the play (p.157, Vol.I) which also led him to believe that his own valour was the same as Segismundo's (p.167, Vol.I). But will had its part to play both in Pepe's apparent confusion and in his resolution of it. Thus when he wanted to provoke the lay brother he would insist that there was deceit in the elaboration of the appearance of religious images (p.205, Vol.I), though he had long accepted the value of the technique in the scenery of the play. Similarly he would accept the reality of a novel by Salgari in so far as that was necessary for him to be filled with adventure, spirit and heroic energy, but he would limit that reality by assigning the characters and the action to foreign people and lands, when he did not want to countenance the moral problem presented by the story:

Yo no podía aceptar que aquello fuera razonable. Es mejor mil veces morir de hambre que comerse a un amigo, pero aceptaba que fuera posible entre otras gentes y bajo otros cielos... (Después de terminar la novela) fui a mi cuarto con el corazón dolorido y pesada el alma. Tenía que atribuir al pobre muerto la cara del padre Ferrer para tranquilizarme. Pero en su conjunto, aquella lectura me devolvía las energías aventureras de los tiempos de la aldea. (p.197, Vol.I)

It was at Christmas that Pepe directed his confusion and half-knowledge with most vigour to his own self-defence. With only the companionship of two younger boys, he felt very alone and very miserable:

Por primera vez en mi vida sentí la angustia de la ausencia. (p.225, Vol.I).

Aquella tarde parecía que todo el mundo lloraba porque yo no había ido a casa ni podía estar con Valentina. Los primeros días de Navidad fueron agradables porque el hecho de verme solo en el colegio tenía una gustosa novedad. Después pareció que el universo se me caía encima.) (p.234, Vol.I).

What was probably little more than a lack of imagination on the

part of his parents who did not want the inconvenience of having him at home whilst they were moving house, Pepe saw as a conspiracy between his father and don Arturo (p.229, Vol.I).

Furthermore, he tried to extract positive, personal benefit from his situation of suffering by seeing himself as a martyr:

Yo era en realidad un mártir o al menos heroicamente desgraciado, lejos de Valentina. (p.231, Vol.I)

He did not really believe he had a halo (p.231 and p.240, Vol.I), but confused memories of a fevered hallucination and above all the need to believe in his own importance, helped Pepe overcome his scepticism and the lay brother's suggestion that, in a manner of speaking, everyone had a halo, finally convinced him.

The other major feature of this notebook which prevents it from being an escapist story of childhood adventures, is the nature of the things which interest Pepe and are made to form part of his image. Pepe is fascinated by heroism, martyrdom and death. To the general savage contrast between the boy's naive notions and what the adult narrator had known, common to both this notebook and the previous one, are added the further particular points that the destruction of the convent school which Pepe had desired and hoped for as a boy (pp.273-4, Vol.I) was in fact accomplished by the German air-force during the Civil War. Furthermore, it was a matter of obsessive concern for him as an adult that la tía Ignacia should not have witnessed any of the horrors which as a boy he had desired for most of the priests of the school (p.12, Vol.I).

The only things of any consequence that Pepe learned whilst at school were from the gentle lay brother who, in many respects, replaced mosén Joaquín as a moderating influence. Though Pepe was still able to disarm and nullify many of the things that

were said to him by way of criticism, there are strong grounds for thinking that, often in spite of himself, he assimilated what the lay brother said to him about the value of all human life and the importance to be accorded to attitudes of mind rather than to public virtue, fame or institutions. Certainly Pepe's defence of the village secretary during the Civil War (see La vida) was in accordance with what the lay brother had said, and part of Pepe's sympathies for the combination of high moral seriousness and anti-institutionalism in anarchism (see El mancebo y los héroes) may have derived from the same source.

La "Quinta Julieta"¹

La "Quinta Julieta" describes the beginning of Pepe's emergence from childhood and his first intimations of what the adult world held for him. For the first time in his life he found himself face to face with dilemmas and contradictions that he could not resolve even with the resources of his imagination.

However desirable the prospect of his father's bankruptcy and public humiliation, and however romantic the prospect of poverty for Pepe personally, he had to recognise that family poverty might constitute a serious obstacle to his ever marrying Valentina:

...lo mismo que Concha, yo me veía a mí solo, pobre y sin carrera ni fortuna con cierta romántica admiración. Todavía me quedarían muchos caminos...Me parecía que no tener nada en el mundo más que la noche y el día - y una pistola en el bolsillo - y vivir en la "Quinta Julieta" era igual que ser millonario. Yo no era ambicioso. Me bastaba con lo indispensable, es decir, con lo que tenía entonces: un lecho, una mesa donde comer, un traje. La pistola era sólo para darme a mí mismo sensación de seguridad. Sería como ser dueño del mundo. Pero tendría que renunciar a Valentina y eso no podía imaginarlo. (p.368, Vol.I)

He was more aware of the adult world than he had been before and that world with its details often seemed to challenge and contradict what had formerly seemed simple and unequivocally desirable. Thus Juan was very affable. He treated Pepe as an equal. He worked at the "Quinta Julieta" and was said to be an anarchist gunman. Initially Pepe was very proud to be his friend. But the boy was sadly disillusioned to find that the gardener/gunman had worked as a tailor's cutter (p.347, Vol. I). (Concha, who was going through a similar stage of

¹Simply the name of the park in Zaragoza which both as an apparent ideal in the real world and later as a source of disillusionment provides both the setting and the key experiences of Pepe's first contact with the larger world.

development, found it difficult to believe that the physical charms of a young man in a bowler hat could be those of a mere circus acrobat.) Pepe, whose adherence to abstract virtues such as honesty had been unconditional and unqualified, in a practical situation of personal need, reinforced by the fact that he was offending his father, saw himself able to purloin up to two pesetas from home on a regular basis. But dishonesty in others left him confused. On the one hand Felipe's thefts from his father's till and Planibell's behaviour to don Marcos were certainly base. On the other hand, don Marcos was such an ass and so mean and Planibell's acquisition so enviable - Pepe was still very keen on guns - that he began to feel his certainty waver.

The strongest assault made by the adult world on Pepe's childhood conceptions occurred with reference to the "Quinta Julieta". Initially the park seemed to confirm Pepe's instinctive identification of beauty with virtue (see above, footnote to p.173). Aesthetically speaking the place was idyllic; it must therefore be a place of virtue and love:

Era la "Quinta Julieta" lo que yo había pensado. Macizos verdes, amarillos, arcos de rosales trepadores que en algunos lugares formaban verdaderos túneles. A medida que avanzábamos por una avenida pavimentada con ladrillos, entre cuyas junturas crecía la hierba, yo iba comprendiendo que allí había una atmósfera de privilegio, un aura celeste sobrenatural. Estaba conmovido y disimulaba mi emoción.. Mirando a mi alrededor, pensaba: éste es el lugar adecuado para Valentina y para mí. Todo es amor. Flores, estanques y cisnes. Yo querría trabajar aquí siempre y vivir con Valentina hasta ser viejos y morirnos el mismo día. Todo es amor aquí. Y la gente debe ser buena como los ángeles. (pp.337-338, Vol.1)

But on discovering that two of the gardeners were always quarrelling, one of them was linked, at least by rumor, with a murder, and the idyllic lake where Pepe had placed the lay

brother's sculptured head had been the scene of a death and possibly of a crime, Pepe's conception of the park had to change and radically (p.345, Vol.I). He had to assimilate the notions of danger, ephemerality and fragility to those of beauty and happiness as in the poem about the rose and wasp (p.374, Vol.I). And the result was that it was relief rather than regret that Pepe felt when he and Valentina left the park:

Confieso que cuando salimos del parque me sentí más tranquilo. Comenzaba a tener miedo de toda aquella belleza sutil, sobre todo estando Valentina. Tenía miedo por ella. (p.419, Vol.I).

If in other fields many of Pepe's childhood conceptions had to yield ground in the face of attack from obvious realities of the adult world, something rather different happened in respect of his relationship with Valentina when, among other things, he became aware of sex. There had always been a sensuous basis to the relationship between the boy and the girl. Apart from the feelings evoked in the boy by the occasional, fleeting glimpse of Valentina's lace-trimmed pants (p.31, Vol.I) and by the prospect of sleeping in the same bed (p.64, Vol.I) there were the shared pleasures of imagining a future life together (pp.75-76, and p.81, (Vol.I), and drinking only when extremely thirsty and putting old slippers on tired feet. It had been the sensuous imagery of the Voces de Dios al alma enamorada rather than the spiritual content of the dialogue that appealed to them. And almost all Pepe's childhood conceptions of virtue were based on real or imagined sensuous experiences and endorsed by the smile of approval of a pretty sweet-smelling girl. Initially whole worlds separated the sentiments Pepe had for Valentina and the confusing and intense feelings evoked by the photographs of "desnudos artísticos"

which he saw on newspaper stalls. Pepe associated these new feelings with Gregorian chant, perilous heroism (p.412, Vol.I) and with sin (pp.413-4, Vol.I), but never for one moment with Valentina. On the contrary, when Valentina arrived in Zaragoza the feelings abated, as though the former childhood feelings with Valentina replaced and overcame them. And even when afterwards kissing the girl on the lips and seeing her naked thigh, Pepe perceived the link between her and the "desnudos artísticos", the perception did not take place on anything but the most superficial level of his consciousness. Memories of her thigh and kiss would remain mingled with a whole host of very different impressions: the Virgen de Pilar processions, a representation of Greek ruins on one of the procession floats, popular music played by the municipal band and the revolving stars of a roundabout. The fundamental components of Pepe's childhood relationship with Valentina had yielded nothing to his new experiences and his new awareness of the world. Part consciously and part unconsciously, he separated her from all that was unpleasant, ugly or disturbing in his life in Zaragoza including various manifestations of sexuality:

Nosotros callábamos y yo sospechaba que aquel hombre (Juan) sabía más del niño ahogado en el estanque y no quería decirlo. Tal vez la madre loca que le escupía en la mano era su amante e iba a la "Quinta Julieta" a verlo a él. Por un momento Juan me pareció peligroso y desagradable. Baltasar, con sus historias de prostitutas también. Y Felipe yendo a los lavaderos de doña Pilar. Yo era diferente. Valentina y yo éramos diferentes. No sabía cómo explicármelo. Ella y yo juntos y solos en el mundo, comiendo en vajillas de plata o alimentándonos de raíces y durmiendo en una cueva seríamos diferentes. Ella y yo solos sabíamos lo que era la vida. Los demás hablaban de la vida - como había dicho Concha - pero Valentina y yo vivíamos. Me refugiaba en aquel secreto y me sentía más fuerte y mejor. (pp.371-372, Vol.I)

If in other fields Pepe's emergence from childhood was beginning with regard to Valentina he still remained a child. It was not simply a question of arrested or slow development in one area

of his life: while in general his conceptions of the world were being made to contain more and more of reality, with regard to Valentina he was actively excluding more and more of reality. The reader begins to wonder if those psychological mechanisms of escape and defence which Pepe had so usefully employed to bolster up his confidence and self-esteem in situations of stress and pain in his village and at school were not now being used, in one area of his experience, with a generally deleterious effect on his personality.

El mancebo y los héroes¹

El mancebo, which describes the violent confrontation of Pepe's childhood world and adult reality in the revolutionary city of Zaragoza, shows how Pepe's emergence from childhood proceeded at a forced pace.

The links between Valentina and the ideal things Pepe aspired to became more marked. In fact he began to deify² her:

¹Hereinafter referred to as El mancebo. Pepe was "el mancebo", in fact a "mancebo de botica" and the anarchists who participated in the revolutionary strike, many of them losing their lives or their freedom, were "los héroes". The title both indicates the enormous divide separating Pepe, a fourteen year old chemist's assistant, on the one hand, and the anarchists with whom he associated on the other, and how different the fate of these first real heroes he was to know was from all the glory and public acclamation he had seen linked with Constantine and Prim.

²Sender has always been interested in deification and its psychology. The very first novel Sender wrote was El verbo se hizo sexo, and according to Olstad, op.cit., Sender was fifteen or sixteen at the time he wrote it. One of Sender's more recent works, Ensayos sobre el infringimiento cristiano re-examines the same subject. A broad distinction can be made between Sender's views on these subjects before the Civil War and afterwards - El verbo se hizo sexo is something of an exception but Sender has dismissed that as "una tontería de la adolescencia, un ejercicio de instituto" (Peñuelas, Conversaciones p.163). Before the Civil War Sender was critical of the psychology of deification, particularly when it occurred in relationships between the sexes. The following quotation from the shortened version of Carta, reproduced in Tres ejemplos, may be taken as representative:
 ...Maurice de Fleury...anota experiencias de anormales de amor, que llama "enamorados transidos". En el examen de sus interesantes anotaciones se ve que muchos de sus enfermos, faltos de fe religiosa, tenían sin embargo, una tendencia atávica a tomar gravemente, metafísicamente, todas las cosas. Relacionaban su amor con lo absoluto; a su amada, con las imágenes del culto, y su emotividad se apagaba a veces en el lecho nupcial y, sin embargo, se excitaba hasta derramar lágrimas en el templo... (p.258)

After the Civil War Sender was much less critical of the psychology of deification and suggested (in Tres ejemplos) that the views expressed in Carta, though substantially valid, revealed immaturity in their "radical aversión al idealismo metafísico" (p.279). Representative of his post-Civil War attitude is the short story Parábola de Jesús y el Inquisidor. In that story it is suggested that though there was no historical evidence for Jesus Christ having ever existed, his importance as the projected deification of all that was best and most valued in man was quite undeniable. In the following speech, Jesus Christ addresses Torquemada:

El dios mío no tenía forma concreta, pero vivía y respiraba en cada uno de los ángeles de Valentina y en todos ellos juntos. Es decir, en aquellas cosas que merecían mi amor. Dios es (pensaba yo entonces) la suma de todo aquello que amamos: la novia, la gloria, el bien, la belleza el poder (también el poder), la ilusión, la dulce esperanza, la pierna de Valentina que había querido besar yo en el carrusel y no me atreví aunque la rocé con la majilla. También era Dios el vaso de agua de nuestra sed y el rayo solar en la nube. Y también estaba Dios en las partes íntimas del cuerpo de Valentina. Yo no podía sino adivinarlas y me parecían hechas de la sustancia misma de los angeles, una sustancia en la que Dios ponía lo mejor de su inventiva. (p.44, Vol.II)

As has been stated (see above pp.186-188), in spite of the clearly sexual components of Pepe's conception of Valentina, he found it impossible to associate her with any of the manifestations of sexuality with which he had come into contact and with many other things of his experience in Zaragoza. Thus the prospect of physical separation from her was neither difficult nor a cause of distress for Pepe and temporarily, at least, he was happy at dividing his life into two - Valentina, and day

Millones de seres humanos se hincaban de rodillas para adorarme sin saberlo adoraban dentro de sí lo mejor de su propia naturaleza, es decir su propia y más alta esencialidad. El fantasma creado por vosotros era más fuerte que todos vosotros juntos. Y lo es hoy... Sí yo. Este mismo jesu-cristo aquí presente. Yo, hijo del espíritu santo, es decir de vuestra imaginación religiosa y capaz de religare al hombre con su dios. Los judíos saben que no existí nunca, los árabes lo sospechan aunque no se atreven a decirlo para no desmentir a Mahoma que habla de mí como de un ser vivo. En los pueblos del remoto Oriente los sabios no ignoran todo lo que estoy diciendo ahora, pero creen en mí lo mismo que creen en un Budha cuya existencia es también un mito. Un mito nobilísimo, claro. Creyendo en Budha y en mí creen en la dimensión divina del hombre y la ejercitan de un modo y otro y continúan la gloriosa tradición de los adoradores del fuego redentor hijo del padre eterno y puente entre lo real y lo absoluto. (p.101)

A very much longer and more detailed expression of the same views can be found in Ensayos sobre el infringimiento cristiano.

to day living in Zaragoza. Two other factors contributed to Pepe's voluntary acceptance of this state of affairs: one was social, the other part-religious and part-psychological. The continued business failures of his father and the financial prosperity and social ambition of don Arturo widened the social gap between the two families and when the boy became a chemist's assistant¹, thoughts of Valentina made him feel ashamed of his day to day existence (p.146, Vol.II). Secondly, the intensity of the dizzy feelings now evoked in him by his sex-imbued conception of Valentina was such that he felt himself temporarily unworthy of what they portended. Feelings of guilt, deriving in part from mosén Orencio (p.413, Vol.II) and in part from his general religious upbringing, (pp.30-31, Vol.I) were also involved in his feelings of unworthiness. When this unworthiness had been overcome, he felt his relationship with Valentina could continue and develop without separation. In the meantime, Pepe came to transfer the difficulties of sexual adjustment and the religious problem, to the difficulty of becoming a hero, one he felt much more competent to resolve²:

La vida era prodigiosa y había que merecerla. No podía imaginar cómo, pero suponía que habría esfuerzo heroico y sangre. También aquella sangre me parecía bien. no se vertía sangre para matar sino para propiciar alguna clase de gloria detrás de la cual estaban los muslos de las muchachas. Mi inclinación hacia el misterio de aquella carne dulcísima me parecía entonces culpable. No podía comprender que las mujeres, pobres de ellas, nos sufrieran en muestras

¹King does not refer to Sender's working as a chemist's assistant in Zaragoza but confirms that he did in Alcañiz, op.cit., pp.17-18.

²A similar kind of psychological transference mechanism is apparent in the behaviour of the "Woman who had been in France" in Las criaturas p.108. The manuscript found in the subterranean passage of the castle of Sancho Abarca had suggested the relationship between various types of exemplary behaviour (pp.116-118 Vol.I). Sender's character, Don Quijote, was to make the same point in conversation with Saint Teresa:

Yo veo en vuestros ojos, señora doncella, la luz de las almas llamadas a las altas empresas, que es igual en la mujer que en el hombre y en el amor como en la guerra o la santidad. (Tres novelas teresianas, Barcelona, 1967, p.95)

ansiedades y deseos a nosotros, brutales y feos.
(pp.46-47, Vol.II)

What converted Pepe's potential disposition to activism into something much more serious was his virtual abandonment by his family in Zaragoza. It is true that prior to this, as tension between him and his father had grown so too had his inclination to follow Juan's advice and befriend the anarchist Checa. It is also true that the unanimous scorn for the clergy expressed by the employees of the first chemist's shop in which Pepe worked (p.74, Vol.II) had already pushed him quite a long way towards anticlericalism. But this was little in comparison with what followed. Pepe felt that his family wanted to get rid of him (pp.83-84, Vol.II) and, as during the Christmas holidays at school in Reus, he desperately needed to compensate for the humiliation and pain this caused him. From the very first, everything pertaining to heroism or alternative values pulled him. The revolutionary city of Zaragoza supplied everything that was necessary, and within a matter of months he came to be as closely identified with anarchism as could be expected of a fourteen year old boy.

It cannot be overstated that Pepe's approach and adherence to anarchism corresponded to psychological need. Prior to his being left on his own, other fantasies had filled this need (p.58 and pp.64-65, Vol.II). The particular attraction of anarchism was that it offered the possibilities of the kind of heroic acts which might make Pepe worthy of Valentina and furthermore, anarchists such as Checa seemed twentieth century versions of the medieval heroes of Sancho Abarca who had so gripped Pepe's imagination (p.165 Vol.II). In the view of the anarchists Pepe need not feel ashamed of his lowly status as chemist's assistant (p.90, Vol.II), and in any case the end to

which all anarchist activism was directed - the destruction of the capitalist state - Pepe identified with the elimination of all the social and economic barriers separating him and Valentina. Following the collapse of the "Quinta Julieta" as a place of idyll in the here and now, Pepe's hopes were transferred to the Eden the anarchist revolution would bring, and he defended his conception of it from the scepticism of even Checa (p.111, Vol.II). As on previous occasions, the edifice of hope that Pepe built for his own defence, was constructed out of the most unlikely of materials. Undoubtedly, unbeknown to Pepe, one of the things that made him so sympathetic to Checa's great diatribe against the "digestivos"¹, people of little imagination concerned only with material satisfaction (pp.90-95, Vol.II), was the relative asceticism in matters of food and drink that reigned in Pepe's own house (pp.66 Vol.II). Religion itself had an enormously important part to play in Pepe's adherence to anarchism and the cause of revolution. Pepe's identification of anarchism and the cause of Christianity began with Checa's suggestion that Jesus Christ had been a victim of the "digestivos" (p.95, Vol.II). It grew immeasurably after he had seen a film on the life and death of Jesus Christ, for Pepe identified Jesus Christ with the dead anarchist worker he had tried to help in their common condition of victim. Furthermore, the similarity between the dress of the Pharisees

¹The simplicity and relative facility of Checa's distinction between the "digestivos" and the rest of mankind, a distinction Pepe happily accepts and makes his own, recalls the distinction Ramiro Vallemediano made between "hangman" and "victim" in The Affable Hangman, p.130. They were about the same age and both later were to recognise that the distinction required some modification. Another point of similarity between the two protagonists lies in the difficulties they experienced when faced by their first serious moral problem (cp. above p.185, and pp.68-69 The Affable Hangman).

in the film and that of the twentieth century Catholic clergy seemed to indicate quite clearly that anti-clericalism was both a valid and a Christian cause:

Para mí, Jesús había sido asesinado por los curas, ya que sus mayores enemigos habían sido los sacerdotes del templo de Jerusalén, vestidos también con sotana y solideo. (Como los de ahora)...Y sin saber cómo ligaba la melodía de Peer Gynt al recuerdo de la sangre del obrero muerto en la calle...El cuerpo de Cristo eran los hombres humildes, sobre cuyas espaldas inocentes pesaba el mundo entero. Jesús había sido uno de ellos. Era Jesús un hombre inocente al que aplastaba con todo su peso ominoso la sociedad de los digestivos.
(p.104, Vol.II)

By this stage, Pepe's commitment to anarchism was such that he barely required the experience of accompanying three Church workers on a charity visit (pp.112-114, Vol.II) or to hear of the thefts of religious paintings by the clergy (p.130 Vol.II) for him to realise how much was amiss in society and how evil the clergy could be. All the force of Pepe's religious upbringing¹ and all the components of his rebelliousness were now involved. Thus Pepe was extremely favourably disposed and quite able to accept Checa's justification of anarchist terrorism permeated as it was with Christian terminology (pp.128-129, Vol.II). The terrorist became a kind of exterminating angel in Pepe's imagination and his cause was not only Christ's but also Pepe's own, for he and Valentina were also victims of capitalist society (p.121, Vol.II)

With the death of Checa and the failure of the revolutionary

¹For an account of the relationship between anarchism, particularly Andalusian rural anarchism, and Roman Catholicism, see G. Brenan, The Spanish Labyrinth (Cambridge 1962), pp.190-191.

strike, Pepe's edifice of hope and self-defence collapsed. Checa and a number of the people Pepe had known personally were dead and with their death came the lesson of what was really meant by such concepts as heroism, self-sacrifice and holocaust of which Pepe had been mistily dreaming since he was a small boy. The news shocked Pepe to the quick, and some twenty years later the narrator had still not overcome the impression it had made upon him:

Aquel día algo se desintegraba de mí, como la luz al pasar por el prisma. Mi prisma era como aquel día turbio de enero con gotas de agua resbalando a veces por el cristal de la vitrina, despaciosamente. Algo dentro de mí maduraba, y una parte importante de mi conciencia se sentía escandalizada para siempre. Todavía lo está hoy. Tal vez hoy más que nunca, Yo había tenido contacto con aquellos hombres, y mi estado de ánimo de aquel día y mis sentimientos son fáciles de recordar, pero expresar mi pensamiento de entonces exigiría un esfuerzo de imaginación del que no me siento capaz por ahora. (p.154, Vol.II)

The society of injustice and unhappiness had prevailed and in a terrifying vision Pepe imagined Checa being judged and executed in the after life by courts of "digestivos" (p.156). Pepe was too shocked and confused to think about the general implications for the future of the immediate failure to establish an Eden, but he knew that his own role would be very different from what he had hitherto imagined. For the moment at least, there was no doubt in his mind about the falsity of his image of himself as fearless hero (p.156, Vol.11).

The character of El mancebo is clearly different from that of the previous notebooks. For the young Pepe, for the first time, ignorance and fantasy proved inadequate modes of escape from the wounding reality of the adult world. For the older Pepe too, for the first time, these memoirs of his past life proved less of an escape from the horror of the prison camp

than a reminder of it. Abandoned by his parents, Pepe's emergence from childhood had proceeded at a forced pace. On Pepe's childhood rebelliousness in the face of his father the graft of anarchism had taken. Though in many respects he still remained a child, there was now force and validity in some of his perceptions and arguments. The stage of his drama was now more than a domestic one.

La onza de oro¹

Disabused in respect of the "Quinta Julieta" and in respect of the prospects of a post-revolutionary Eden, Pepe suffered further blows to his conception of the world in his grandfather's village. This third idyll, elaborated like the other two to protect Pepe from the overwhelming and demeaning problems of the here and now, crumbled on close acquaintance. But what makes La onza de oro more than an interesting redevelopment of the psychological themes of the previous two notebooks, is its presentation of criteria of potential use in the evaluation of Pepe's psychology and morality. If in the first two notebooks Sender qualified the escapism of the boy protagonist and the adult narrator through the contrast between Argelés and Spain twenty years before, and if in notebooks three and four, the possibility of escapism was denied by the nature of the boy's experiences, from La onza de oro onwards, there abound criteria other than Pepe's own which insistently raise questions as to the validity of his responses to reality whether escapist or not.

Like Pepe's return to his native village from Zaragoza, his quest for Valentina and his wanting to join mosén Joaquín in death, Pepe's journey to his grandfather's village was an attempt to find comfort and support from the past. Pepe's major notions of the place had been gained when he was six or seven and in memory he saw it as a kind of protected idyll (p.104, Vol.II), the importance of which grew immeasurably when

¹A simple and appropriate title. It was the story of the gold ounce that dominates Pepe's experiences in his grandfather's company. The fact of that story gave the lie to the third of Pepe's idylls.

the circumstances of his life in Zaragoza became intolerable. Then he came to forget all his reservations. Unfortunately, the very mechanism of escapism through which Pepe mistily turned to a rosy past from a terrifying present hindered rather than helped his adjustment to reality. The village was to deny him even temporary respite from the general problems of Zaragoza, largely because, through psychological need, he had come to expect so much of it. Perhaps he would have found it easier to see the village for what it was, if he had not needed to believe it was an idyllic haven. He might have been able to learn something from his grandfather too. Certainly, he would not have prepared for himself an inevitable clash between expectations and reality very similar to what he had experienced in Zaragoza. (Exactly the same thing happens to Pepe with regard to Valentina: the more the problems of the present made him turn to idyllic conceptions of her and to separate her from the rest of his life, the more difficult it was for him to accommodate her within his real life and the more frustrations and feelings of deprivation he prepared for himself.) Pepe was profoundly shocked on hearing the story that gives the title to the notebook and briefly explored its general implications:

Aquel pueblo ya no era un lugar idílico...Era más bien - pensaba yo - un lugar a la sombra de cuyos chopos Stanás dormía su sienta con un ojo abierto. Tal vez era así en todas partes, volvía a pensar yo, asustado. (pp.207-208, Vol.II)

But this continued need to believe in an idyll was such that he rejected all disturbing thoughts, assuming that the sordid story of cupidity and murder was accidental and atypical, and that but for the presence of the unpunished criminal Benito, the village was still idyllic. Some effort of imagination was

required for such an assumption for the story made it quite clear that moral shortcomings in La Barona and La Paula as well as in Benito were key factors in the murders.

Whilst Pepe has concerned with idylls and the elimination of what disturbed the idyll in the village - he wanted to denounce Benito to the very authorities whose suspect he was proud to be (p.264, Vol.II) - his grandfather's approach to things was very different:

Para él, la vida era un juego de necesidades. O el hombre vence a las necesidades, o las necesidades vencen a él. Todo lo demás era broma y ganas de hablar. (p.232, Vol.II)

Misfortune and evil, for Pepe's grandfather, were neither accidental nor atypical but the very stuff of reality. The situation of Benito was of potential use to him and his illegitimate son, Miguel, Benito's half-brother. Hence his skilful use of his prestige and authority to invalidate Benito's confession and to obscure the issue of his insanity. (Privately Luna appeared to be of the opinion that Benito was sane (p.221 Vol.II). Publicly he declared him to be mad (p.252, Vol.II) but the public declaration seems to have been made to disguise his own interest and its effect was cancelled by the influence he brought to bear on the doctor (p.252 Vol.II) whose signature would have been necessary for Benito's certification.) The final result was that when Benito committed suicide the State had no claim on him either as a criminal or as a mental incompetent and his estate passed to Miguel.

Luna's behaviour was paradigmatic of peasant realism and astuteness, which coupled with a certain elemental respect for his fellows, had ensured his social and material success in the

village. Though the reader would not be hard put to point out his limitations particularly in respect of his attitude to women (p.181, Vol.II), which Pepe found most objectionable, the man's virtues and achievement at the age of ninety are clearly apparent:

No halagaba mi abuelo a nadie, pero tampoco los maltrataba. Tenía para los demás ese respeto que tienen entre sí, en el bosque, los animales de una misma especie. No tenía vida afectiva, y si la tenía, la disimulaba de tal forma que nadie esperaba de él una mirada tierna, y mucho menos una palabra dulce. Estaba satisfecho de sí, de su familia, de su pasado, no esperaba nada de su futuro. Y exigía a los demás que estuvieran a un tiempo satisfechos y desesperanzados también. "Ni miedo ni esperanza", como decía el clásico latín. (p.218, vol.II)

Pepe revered this man whose ethics and behaviour were so different from his own more than anyone else in the world (pp.256-257, Vol.II), yet he paid almost no attention to what he said. Thus, when Pepe was faced with a practical problem with regard to Valentina, his approach was totally different from what one would have expected from his grandfather. The problem was to bridge the gulf separating Valentina from the rest of Pepe's life:

...mirando a Valentina me decía: "No debo verla como un ángel, sino como un ser humano. Ni pensar que estamos en el cielo, sino en la tierra con todas sus impurezas." Y en aquellos momentos me sentía orgulloso de mi relación con Checa y con el Bronco, y de los secretos que conocía de la vida de Benito. Pensaba que podría hablar de aquello a todo el mundo, porque aquello era la vida. A todo el mundo, incluso a mi novia (p.257, Vol.II).

The problem, had Pepe formulated it clearly, had two parts. The first was to inform Valentina about the rest of his life experiences, so that she could understand them and would no longer be unreal, unworldly and remote from him. The second was to narrow the gap separating him from Valentina's parents: to make himself personally acceptable to them. The first part of the problem would have been best resolved if he had spoken to Valentina on her own. The second, with due circumspection,

might have been reasonably tackled in general conversation. But Pepe lacked both calculation and control. He did not succeed in seriously acquainting Valentina with anything and merely alienated the sympathies of the indulgent doña Julia (p.263, Vol.II). Pepe's attention was primarily on himself:

...quería reducir a alguna clase de congruente unidad
mi vida contradictoria de aquellos días.
(p.262, Vol.II)

He was either ignorant of the possible thoughts and reactions of his audience, or momentarily unable to think of them. The contrast between Pepe, on the one hand, and his grandfather or even Bronco, "...que penetraba fácilmente en las intenciones de los demás." (p.224, Vol.II), on the other hand, could not be greater.

The person who most resembled Pepe in the village was Benito, and in view of what happened to him the resemblance is highly significant. If in times of stress Pepe returned to a past "donde todas las cosas habían sido mejores" (p.219, Vol. II), Benito sought to regain the company of his dear mother:

El carácter de Benito cambió en aquellos días, y se hizo llorón y bondadoso. Ahora pienso que cuando iba a pasar la noche a la sepultura de su madre, lo que hacía era desvivirse en el real sentido de la palabra, y quería volver inconscientemente al útero de su madre y desaparecer "hacia atrás" en el tiempo, sabiendo que hacia adelante todo habría de serle funesto. Quería, en suma anular y borrar su propio nacimiento, si podía.
(p.231, Vol.II)¹

¹Two fundamental points underly Sender's post-Civil War notions of man, reality and the relationship of the one to the other. First, that reality can and should be regarded as perfect, see above p.154.

And secondly, that most men find themselves at odds with reality and the problem of adjustment to it considerable. The following quotation, taken from Los noventayochos, may be taken as representative of Sender's expression of this view:

Hace mucho tiempo que los españoles individualistas (religiosamente fieles al yo privado) sabemos que después de integrarnos "perfectamente" en la

Furthermore, Benito, like Pepe, was never able to reconcile himself to his lot. He was dissatisfied both as second son and as owner of the family estates. He was not even able to accept his good fortune of being undetected as a murderer. Furthermore, with the considerable advantages he had enjoyed

perfección de la realidad nuestra pasión más fuerte sigue sin satisfacerse. Es nuestra pasión por la libertad en la cual y sólo en ella podemos realizar nos. Esa pasión nos lleva a un círculo vicioso: la libertad total es la muerte. Sólo en ella nos liberamos de las mil formas directas o indirectas, francas o capciosas, de esclavitud. Y sin embargo, esa liberación en la cual nos realizamos es nuestra ruina. (pp.65-66)

The tension between these two fundamental points: the one implying the value of acceptance of and adjustment to reality - the essence of Sender's criticism of Unamuno relates to the latter's refusal to accept human mortality - the other, that acceptance and adjustment will normally prove impossible, underlies the tensions and ambivalence of novels such as The Affable Hangman, Las criaturas, etc. The philosophy and psychology of alienation occupy Sender too in Tres ejemplos, as we have noted, see above p.143 and footnote 1. The relative frivolousness of Sender's manner of expression should not be allowed to obscure the basic seriousness of the point he is making: alienation is a fact of human existence and in different circumstances, different men will pursue different paths to resolve their feelings of alienation. Both sexuality and a desire to return to childhood security figure among them. Suicide may, in extreme circumstances, be a further solution. There is a certain extravagance in Sender's suggestion, for which he claims confirmation from El Greco's El entierro del conde Orgaz (Tres ejemplos pp.280-281), that death may be regarded as a form of reintegration, parallel if not identical to that of sexual intercourse, but undoubtedly the parallels he establishes between the psychological function - as solutions to alienation - of nostalgia for childhood, sexual activity (for some people, perhaps), and suicide are reasonable and unextravagant. Alienation in Pepe's life caused him to adopt all three solutions. Benito was to adopt two.

in the village, he had never been able to make himself respected. Accepting the differences between Pepe and Benito, their common difficulties of psychological adjustment and their common impracticality raise disturbing questions as to what might be Pepe's future lot. The fact of Benito's suicide and our knowledge that Pepe himself will finally commit suicide, make us begin to consider Pepe's psychology in a much more serious light than hitherto.

On reading La onza one wonders if Pepe would ever break out of the psychological vicious circle he had made for himself. His general tendency to construct idyllic fantasies in situations of difficulty interfered repeatedly with his perception of reality and made it difficult for him to learn anything from it. The only lessons he did learn came from violent clashes between his fantasies and reality, which were often of such intensity that he could assimilate little from them and he tended to fantasise again. The major problems of sexual adjustment for one such as he who had had such a strong Catholic upbringing, greatly augmented by his tendency to idealise Valentina on the basis of memory whenever he found himself in situations of distress, difficult as they were, might, one feels, have been susceptible to, at least, a partial solution, had he been able to learn something from his experiences, either in Zaragoza or his grandfather's village. Certainly his wish to associate Valentina and the rest of his life was there to help him. In the event his attempts proved balefully inadequate, and he added to his problems by constructing an ideological barrier between himself and her family. Would he have any further opportunities, and if he had them would he be able to take advantage of them? If not, what we know of his character suggests the cycle of frustration and fantasy would continue and the possibility of

his adequate adjustment to reality be ever more remote.

Los niveles del existir¹

In Los niveles the psychological processes of Pepe described in the previous notebooks are further developed. The extra interest of Los niveles lies in the figure of Isabel and the possibility of Pepe elaborating a new system of values based on what she thinks and his relationship with her.

Initially perhaps, one has the impression that the Pepe of Los niveles is more circumspect, mature and realistic than

¹The title of the notebook appears to be based on a series of comments that the adult narrator interpolates in the narrative (pp.424-5, Vol.II), in which he alludes to the various kinds of deception in which the circumstances of Pepe's life, and his decisions, involved him. An implicit contrast should be understood between "existir," "estar" and "existencia" on the one hand, and "ser," "esencia" and "esencialidad" on the other. Within Pepe's scale of values the second group of terms were associated with commitment to an ideal, e.g. a soldier's commitment of himself to the ideal for which he was fighting, whereas normal sentiment was related to the circumstances of a man's situation and existence, his "estar" (pp.148-9, Vol.I). Clearly Pepe's commitment to Valentina was not a matter of normal sentiment, since she too was an ideal (Sender too, suggests that the elaboration of an object of worship involves "esencialidad", as the quotation from Parábola de Jesús y el Inquisidor, see above footnote 2, p.189 indicates). Pepe's implication is that any default in respect of a commitment to an ideal, will involve a man both in complications and deceptions. This is substantiated by the elder narrator's admission of his lack of sympathy and affection for Pepe in Los niveles (p.424, Vol.II) and by the fact that Los niveles is the first notebook that was not able to hold the narrator's undivided attention and distract him from the circumstances of the prison camp where he was writing - there are some ten interpolations in the narrative. (Sender, for his part, suggests - in Ensayos sobre el infringimiento cristiano, p.177 - that many of the psychoses and neuroses of modern society may be attributable to a "falta de actividad esencial en el movimiento".) Of course, the narrator's view need not necessarily be the reader's and, as I argue in the body of this chapter, both Pepe's vices and his virtues derive from his commitment to his ideal.

hitherto . He no longer casts around looking for idyllic geographical settings nor yet is he concerned with the creation of a revolutionary Eden. He seems - albeit reluctantly - to have resigned himself to narrowing the gap between himself and Valentina by the more conventional means of passing examinations. Such an impression is largely erroneous. A careful examination of the views Pepe expresses, reveals that his values are still centred on Valentina, that he is still inflexible and that whenever there is a clash between what his experience seems to be telling him and what his preconceptions tell him ought to be the case, it is not his preconceptions that yield.

Further away from Valentina in time and space than ever he had been before Pepe came to associate the physical beauty of the place where she was staying, Panticosa, with spiritual qualities:

...mi pobre Valentina...dormía sus siestas verna-
les frente a los glaciares y al lago de aguas frías, en
una altura blanca y azul de ángeles y de hielos
caminantes. (p.310, Vol.II)

Furthermore, in the manner of classic, Spanish puritanism, he commensurately depreciated what Alcañiz had to offer, projecting onto the town and its Moorish past all the vices he most despised:

En aquella población, donde todas las cosas comenzaban
a tomar un aire desmalazado como yo imagino debían ser
las comunidades judías o moriscas en la Edad Media y
especialmente en el levante español (estaba bastante
cerca de Tortosa y del Mediterráneo y se sentía en el
aire el reflejo del mar), allí, digo, no me extrañaban
ni el colegio de los escolapios desorganizados y fácil,
ni el fraile faunesco, ni la falta de rigor en los estudios.
(p.304, Vol.II)

He substantiated his argument with such weak and unconvincing evidence it was apparent that there was more underlying it even than frustration. Pepe's way of life in Alcañiz, and particularly his relationship with Isabel, made him feel profoundly

guilty and this was of key importance as a determining factor in his assessment of the town:

Olvido decir que aquella aventura del cine contribuyó también a mi idea mudéjar de la urbe... (p.312 Vol.II)

Again then, Pepe's system of values centred on Valentina prevailed, and guilt associated with them had the effect of closing his mind to new experiences and rendering him incapable of assessing them impartially.

Though from the first Pepe was biased against Alcañiz and everything in it, including his relationship with Isabel, for a time the battle for Pepe's mind and loyalty was hard fought.

The pleasure of the sexual relationship were considerable and Pepe was an enthusiastic admirer of Isabel's body:

Las formas de aquella muchacha no habían alcanzado aún la madurez y eran encantadoras. Todo en ellas era promesa que un día - cuando dejara de ser lo que era y se casara - probablemente alcanzaría plenitud. (p.345 Vol.II)

The feelings that derived, with the passage of time, from the mutually gratifying relationship were such that in spite of Pepe's determination to keep his two relationships separate, they were constantly overlapping, and Pepe became very confused over what was love¹ and what was not:

¹Writing before the Civil War to a Spanish girl - in Carta Sender appeared to have no doubts or reservations about what love was and was not. According to the following passage - taken from Tres ejemplos - only the kind of relationship Pepe had with Isabel could be regarded as love. The Valentina relationship was an aberration.

El amor entre personas situadas en el mismo plano social, con los mismos derechos y libertades, con los instintos y los sentidos en función normal, es el Amor - con mayúscula, si quieres - y hasta el divino amor... Es curioso que vuestra vaga aspiración al amor os lleve, a través de las supersticiones tradicionales, a una angustia y a una sed insaciables y en muchos casos a anomalías que caen en lo patológico. No deja de ser curioso también que sin el ensueño, sin la obsesión de la pureza ni la eternidad, el amor ofrezca la pureza, la sencillez trascendental, la fortaleza y reciedumbre a las que aspiráis. (pp.277-278)

Pero ¿estaba yo enamorado de Isabelita? Más que enamorado. Ella era ya una necesidad, como el comer y el beber. No podía prescindir de ninguna de esas cosas. Ni de la tercera. Si Isabelita me abandonaba y se iba con otro, yo me vería en un gravísimo trance y no sabría qué hacer. (p.408, Vol.II)

Comienzo por decir que aquello no era amor y que el mío era entero para Valentina...En fin, como decía antes, conocí el amor. (p.336, Vol.II)

No sabía entonces que la felicidad física de uno de los amantes depende de la del otro. Tiene que haber acuerdo. ¿Será ese acuerdo, es decir, ese goce recíproco, el amor? (p.338, Vol.II)

This, from Pepe's point of view. There was furthermore an astonishing parallel between Isabel's conceptions of idyllic bliss with Pepe (p.345, Vol.II) and Pepe's earlier ones with Valentina (pp.75-76, Vol.II). If the battle lines had been slightly differently drawn, Isabel and the sexual pleasures of the here and now, might have superseded future hopes and past memories in Pepe's esteem. Though widely divergent from conventional morality - much of which was fundamental to Pepe's

But Sender's certainty on the subject was even then more apparent than real. The letter was written in the first instance with the object of seducing, or preparing the way to seduction of just such a "Dulcinea" as Valentina, as he admits in Tres ejemplos (p.278). But not only did Sender know the profound appeal of an attractive virgin at that time, he knew it whilst engaging in a sexual relationship with another woman (p.244). In other words, at the age of thirty-two Sender was in the same situation as Pepe Garcés at the age of sixteen. He too, was deeply divided, in spite of what Carta says. The difference between them lay in that Pepe finally rejected Isabel and retained his attachment to Valentina, whereas Sender rejected the attractive virgin to whom he had addressed Carta and retained his relationship with his sleeping partner (p.246). (From the date of Sender's visit to Moscow - May 1933 - and from the date of his first marriage - January 1934 - it would seem possible that his "Isabel" became his wife and was, in fact, Amparo Barayón.) Sender's post Civil War strictures on Carta - see above p.189 footnote 2 - indicate a change in his attitude to the psychology of deification, as has been stated, and, one might add, an at least implicit recognition of the value of the kind of love he had formerly criticised.

relationship with Valentina - there was something profoundly right and appropriate in his sexual relationship with Isabel, and Isabel's behaviour was not without important controls:

A pesar de su extrema juventud Isabelita no era tonta, tenía la sabiduría de los instintos y sabía que no debía dar su virginidad al cura, al viejo rico, o al esposo convencional, sino a otro adolescente para quien aquella fuera también la primera vez. (p.339 Vol.II)

Pepe recognised this and from time to time was able to see not only Isabel (pp.417-418, Vol.II) but also the more worldly wise and experienced Trini, not as immoral but generous persons, victimised by small-town puritanism:

...Trini era esa moza fácil de todas las ciudades pequeñas que concentra en su generosa persona las malquerencias de los puritanos. Había tenido varios amantes y quería hacer compatibles los respetos de una sociedad convencional y los placeres del libertinaje, lo que en una ciudad pequeña era imposible. (p.312, Vol.II)

(Of course in these comments Pepe was criticising people like himself and value systems like his, based on Valentina, which had judged Alcañiz so harshly!)

So strong was Pepe's attachment to Isabel, that he was able to recognise the good sense of some of the things she said, even when they attacked such fundamental notions of his as his own heroism:

Era la primera vez que veía una mujer dispuesta a preferir el cobarde al valiente. Es verdad que un hombre en peligro de ser atropellado por un autobús debe apartarse y no insultar al chófer ni comenzar a patadas con el motor. Pero aquel descubrimiento me dejaba perplejo y no sabía qué decir. (p.356, Vol.II)

And on observation of hers on the subject of fidelity not only arrested Pepe amidst the double standards he held at this time, but left such a deep impression upon him that even at the time of writing his memoirs it caused him to interrupt the flow of the narrative and to digress on human limitations. Here is her observation:

No digo que ella (Valentina) no quiera ser te fiel, no digo que no. Pero nunca será completa esa felicidad (sic, but surely a misprint for "fidelidad") porque en los sueños se dejará besar por otros y se acostará y hará el amor, sin querer, con otros. No existe la fidelidad¹ que tu dices. En ninguna parte del mundo, y eso más vale que te desengañes a tiempo, Pepe. Te lo digo muy en serio. (p.420, Vol.II) (My parentheses)

In the event, the good sense of Isabel and the positive features of her relationship with Pepe are of more importance as criteria against which Pepe's psychology and subsequent behaviour can be measured than they are as new principles for Pepe to adopt, for the Valentina-centred system of values triumphed in the battle for Pepe's allegiance. An important factor in that

¹Carta suggests that a happy sexual relationship was the only basis for true fidelity:

Cuando el individuo no ha padecido en la infancia y en la primera juventud la presión de un idealismo de sublimación que le aparta de lo real sin llevarle al plano místico, sus instintos se desarrollan normalmente, con las solas inhibiciones impuestas por el respeto de sí mismo que se adquiere en las relaciones con los demás y por la acción libre de la razón libre que vela por los instintos mejor que un buen neurólogo. Sobre las inhibiciones naturales del instinto se va formando el carácter sexual del individuo, que es un factor importante, aunque yo no creo que sea decisivo en la formación de la personalidad total, como han comprobado en Alemania investigadores discrepantes de Freud. El amor empieza con una simpatía sexual recíproca. Su desarrollo y su cumplimiento en un plazo breve - con la posesión - en general normal y no debería verse entorpecido ni dificultado por circunstancias económicas, sociales, morales. La cosa no puede ser más sencilla. Reciprocidad de deseos en el instinto y de simpatía en el carácter. Esta simpatía produce, por la convivencia, la ternura que resuscita en la intimidad la delicia de la primera infancia. Es simple y alegre el amor. La reciprocidad del deseo y su satisfacción casi inmediata aleja los complejos. La necesidad de lo leal, la "fidelidad", viene sola con esa ternura cuya aparición en el amor da a éste su plenitud, porque es una ternura que nace de una gratitud fisiológica que se profesan los instintos en pleno cumplimiento de su misión. Estos elementos bastan, como es natural, para hacer risueña y duradera la vida amorosa de los amantes. (Tres ejemplos, pp.274-275.)

triumph was the possibility of pregnancy - the sempiternal ally of conventional morality -. The problem was too large for Isabel, and though she was able to talk about it - something quite beyond Pepe's idealism and double standards - her talk was compounded of a large measure of fantasy:

Ella estaba preocupada por la posibilidad del embarazo... y me dijo que no me preocupara, porque si resultaba embarazada, se iría a servir a Barcelona y allí daría a luz y se dedicaría a nodriza. "O mejor a puta". Y añadía muy convencida: "No hay mal que por bien no venga." El bien era, al parecer, la prostitución. (p.356, Vol.II)

Pepe had no solutions either, and the amalgam of Isabel's incompetence on this most crucial of subjects, the possibility of public ignominy, and all the talk of prostitution and pregnancy finally disenamoured Pepe of their relationship and decisively prevented him from basing any alternative values upon it.

When Pepe had finally convinced himself that his relationship with Isabel was essentially despicable, there remained the problem of how Pepe was going to live with himself and thoughts of Valentina whilst it continued. His attempted solutions were pathetic and sometimes base:

Yo trataba de lograr mi unidad interior convenciéndome a mí mismo de que cada día hacía algo a favor del lado divino de la creación. Lo que hacía era no más escribir cartas a Valentina llenas de protestas de fidelidad y constancia. (p.359, Vol.II)

...un día, sin darme cuenta, conseguí la síntesis, es decir hice el amor con Isabelita pensando en Valentina. (p.415 Vol.II)

Isabel did not enter his calculations at all, concerned as he was to resolve his own problem. From his relationship with her, he took sexuality as an indisputably valuable acquisition and assimilated it to his ideals with Valentina whilst not only dissociating Isabel from it but, as we have seen, through an extraordinary piece of double think, also despising her for

the very generosity and openness which had enabled him to acquire it. Henceforth, sexuality with Isabel would be associated with guilt, the possibilities of pregnancy and public ignominy, whereas sexuality with Valentina would be totally problem-free and idyllic, the natural development and consummation of all the sensuous pleasures they had enjoyed together as children (p.410, Vol.II) This was Pepe's position immediately before his trip to Bilbao.

It is very difficult to arrive at any assessment of Pepe at this point. On the one hand, the injustice he commits in respect of Isabel and the extravagance and danger of his plans for Valentina - he made specific preparations for their suicide¹ (p.415 Vol.II) is indisputable, on the other, there was something of the character of a life-enhancing myth in Pepe's conception of their love:

Valentina y yo nos queríamos como Dios debe querernos a nosotros, y Dios no tiene celos de nuestros placeres tampoco. El nos los proporciona. El sexo, para Valentina y para mí, podía ser fuente de gozo al servicio de nuestro amor, que había sido antes del sexo, sería después del sexo y era superior al sexo...nuestro amor sería firme, fatal, invariable y eterno como las leyes del orbe por las que los astros y las galaxias giran. Toda nuestra vida - y nuestra muerte - no era sino una experiencia incidental en la inmensidad natural y sobrenatural de nuestro amor. (pp.426-7, Vol.II)

the value of which the reader cannot deny². Undeniable too is the reality of Pepe's situation of victim: Pepe's family

¹As might be expected, the pre-Civil War Sender of Carta was very critical of the association of death with love:

El decadentismo de lo erótico-metafísico lo verás en la frecuencia con que va a dar en la preocupación de la muerte, embelleciéndola y considerándola no como parece que es en definitiva, no como la caída en un vacío absoluto y sin nombre, sino como la culminación de una amor del espíritu equivalente en cierto modo a la cópula en el amor físico. (p.262 Tres ejemplos)

(Note the different value Sender places on the copulation/death parallel in Tres ejemplos itself, see above p.201 note 1, after the Civil War.)

²Nor too can the post-civil war Sender. He suggests to Peñuelas

background, his religious upbringing and the social divisions of Spain, were manipulating him and abusing him as surely as he was Isabel. The situation was one of extreme pain for him: anticipation of the total breakdown of all communication with Valentina had him attempting suicide (p.413, Vol.II) and the failure of his attempt to impress Valentina's family with his bachillerato certificate left him profoundly depressed. The social gap was larger than ever and the psychological gap, between how he had thought of her and she of him, on the one hand, and all the rest of his experience including even a refined form of sexuality which he wanted to assimilate her to, on the other, apparently unsurmountable.

If anything more on the pain and pathos of Pepe's situation needed to be developed for the reader to retain any sympathy for him, the last pages of the book most surely provide it. One by one all the remaining props to Pepe's existence and sanity were to collapse. After the conformist path to winning Valentina had been shown to lead nowhere, contact with Palmar was to remind Pepe that his following it had constituted a betrayal of revolutionary principles, and so to misery were added feelings of guilt. Furthermore, to the misery of failure to acquaint Valentina with sexual feelings and the guilt of his relationship with Isabel, was added the pain of discovering that Isabel - who had been of tremendous psychological importance as a temporary substitute for Valentina - had deceived him and was much less devoted than he had imagined. For other reasons too, the future looked blacker than ever: if Pepe was to help

that even bad poets were of value, in so far as they were creators of myths:

Siempre hay...(algún poeta) que acierta con la cristalización perfecta del mundo de la superconciencia y enriqueciendo la mitología enriquece la realidad de todos. (Conversaciones p.242)

the anarchist group of which Palmar was a member, as he felt he must, he would be involved in undermining the interests of the two people who had shown him most kindness and generosity whilst in Alcañiz, don Alberto and don Bruno. The dual character of the problems which had beset him with regard to Valentina in the past - part specific to him and his particular family background, part deriving from the contradictions and tensions within Spanish society - seemed likely to manifest itself again with renewed intensity. His relations with his employers were going to be threatened not only by Pepe's personal need to believe in himself - through anarchism and heroism - but also by the tensions and conflicts in labour relations. This further complication reinforces the link - already clearly established in this notebook by the two suicide attempts made by the boy - between the younger and the older Pepe, a victim both of his own psychology and his country at war, and makes one feel that the essential pattern of Pepe's life had, by this time, largely been established.

Los términos del presagio¹

The beginning of Los términos, describing Pepe's life till he left Alcañiz, is essentially a continuation of Los niveles: the tempo of events and the manner of their presentation are very much the same as in previous books, and again one has the impression of happenings of importance in Pepe's experience and development. Thereafter - with the major exception of the events at Biescas, which may be considered as a coda to those at Alcañiz - the tempo changes and becomes quite different: some fifteen years pass and with them a multitude of minor events, without the reader registering the passage of time. For the narrator, evidently, the years intervening between his time in Alcañiz and the Civil War, pre-saged - particularly - at the end of this notebook, were of little interest. Whereas previously, every year and sometimes every season had brought with them new and vivid experiences which remained clear and important in his memory, this was no longer the case. Behind and through the narrator, the author seems to be saying that nothing much of importance happened to Pepe Garcés and, more significantly, that essentially the development of Pepe Garcés was complete when he left Alcañiz, the intervening years did not change him,

¹Hereinafter referred to as Los términos. The first time Sender used this title was with reference to three of his early novels, O.P., Viaje, and Noche, as he explains in a preface to a new edition of the first work (O.P., Mexico, 1941, p.6). In that context, as King very reasonably suggests - op.cit., p.53 - the omen was that "of the chaos of the coming Civil War". The Civil War is presaged here too, in the olive-pickers' strike, the corruption in the army in Morocco and in the turbulent atmosphere of the Second Republic, but since in this work the main focus of interest is on the way Pepe reacts and adjusts to the objective world rather than on the objective world as such, it would seem reasonable to see in the title too an allusion to the pre-sage this novel provides of how Pepe would react to the later challenge of the Civil War. As I indicate, there is a clear parallel between Pepe's living off the past and for memories, following Isabel's abortion, and what the narrator does in Argelés, and it is this novel above all others that establishes it.

and at the outbreak of the Civil War he was very much as he had been fifteen years before¹. This is confirmed by various

¹Parallel to the scant attention given to these years, and of similar effect, is the fact that, relatively speaking, throughout Los términos Sender makes Pepe Garcés progressively younger. In the introduction to Crónica the editor was quite clear about the date of Pepe's death and his age at that time:

Mi amigo murió en el campo de concentración de Argelés el día 18 de noviembre de 1939 a los 36 años de edad.
(p.18 Vol.I)

Consistent with the above is the affirmation (pp.12-13 Vol.I) that Pepe visited tía Ignacia in 1930 at the age of twenty-eight. However, we are told in Los términos that Pepe was sixteen when he travelled from Alcañiz to Madrid (p.44, Vol.III) and a year later (when presumably he was seventeen) there occurred Primo de Rivera's coup. Now since we know that coup took place on 13th Sept.1923, it is quite apparent that somewhere Pepe has lost three years, for at that time, on the basis of his age when he died, Pepe should have been twenty. Similarly we are told that Pepe was almost twenty-two when he finished his university course and was sent to Morocco (p.123, Vol.III), that he spent one year there and returned to Spain immediately after the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic. But by 14th April 1931 he ought to have been twenty-eight not twenty-three, or at the very most twenty-four. When he speaks to Pepe Alfonso Madrigal is about thirty-four. Pepe who knew something about this relative's background estimates that Madrigal was between twelve and fifteen years older than Pepe, i.e. Pepe was at the most twenty-two in March 1931. But he should have been twenty-eight! If all these modifications of Pepe's age did not point in the same direction, one might reasonably conclude that Sender had been negligent in checking his manuscript before submitting it for publication and they were without further significance. But their consistency does suggest a degree of organisation, whether conscious or unconscious, and it also has a definite effect. Like the scant coverage given to the years between Pepe's leaving Alcañiz and the outbreak of the Civil War, the effect is to bring the one and the other closer together, and to give those years even less importance. This effect is interesting not only, as has been indicated as a suggestion that Pepe's development was complete when he left Alcañiz, but also with regard to the similarities and differences between the author and Pepe Garcés. If hitherto Pepe's life has followed Sender's very closely, henceforth the two diverge considerably. If Pepe was relatively indifferent to the Spain of his time, and inactive from the age of seventeen up till the time of the Civil War, Sender was totally different. He was extremely active both as a conspirator, (Peñuelas, Conversaciones, pp.84-85) and as a political commentator. His deep and passionate political and moral commitment is apparent, for example in his visit to Casas Viejas and his denunciation of the atrocities there. Whereas Pepe merely dabbled without conviction in political activities during this period, Sender was deeply concerned to find a radical ideology and programme to support: after being disillusioned with anarchist inefficiency, he came to align himself with communism. Another significant difference between the two

comments about Pepe made while he was in Alcañiz. If we bear these points in mind, the importance of the events in Alcañiz and what Sender and the narrator do register as significant in the remainder of the notebook is notably enhanced. Alcañiz completes the picture of Pepe's development and the remainder of the narrative can be seen essentially as a series of implicit comments upon his formed views and character: the few things that do interest the narrator in the course of such an extensive and agitated period of Spanish history speak eloquently of his priorities and values.

Pepe's suicide attempt at the end of Los niveles was a cry of total despair. The frustration of that suicide compelled Pepe to try to face the world that had treated him so badly and in which he had behaved so badly. But of course nothing was resolved. The problems he had foreseen with regard to his employers became real, and living itself an unrelieved torment:

Desde la noche de mi suicidio frustrado yo era otro...
 "Estoy en la vida - pensaba - como en una cárcel de la que no me dejan salir." (p.17, Vol.III)

The close links between the situation of the young Pepe and that of the narrator suggested throughout los niveles¹, are apparent again here. They were both, in a manner of speaking, prisoners

men lies in the fact that Sender married whereas Pepe did not, remaining faithful to the idea of a girl he had known from childhood. Pepe indifferent to the present, lived for the past, Sender, passionately interested in the present, lived for the future and was not afraid to change his past ideas - on love and politics, which had once been the same as Pepe's - in accordance with the demands of the present and the future. In general terms it may be said that Pepe, at the outbreak of the Civil War was what Sender would have been had he spent the previous decade and a half in relative isolation from the world, or at least without changing and developing. Furthermore, Sender would not have changed or developed, if he had not been able to free himself from the kind of Valentina centred value system that dominated Pepe.

¹See above, p.214.

and they had both lost all hope. It is illuminating to compare the editor's comments on Pepe after he had heard of the fall of Madrid and Valencia:

El fluido que sostenía sus nervios se fue...con la esperanza de volver a la lucha. Era un hombre muerto. (p.12. Vol.I)

and Pepe's discussion with him on the subject of a man's "substancia" (pp.14-15, Vol.I), with Bibiana's worried observations on Pepe:

Tenga cuidao, porque al hombre que pierde la sustancia, el aire se lo lleva. (p.17, Vol.III)

Bibiana's observation was made before he was faced with the problems of Isabel's pregnancy and abortion. A crucial change in him occurred when he was burdened with them too:

...aquellos días fueron definitivos en la ruta que debía seguir Isabelita. Y yo mismo. La vida no era sueño, o en todo caso ese sueño lo soñaban también las cosas y los animales, los meteoros y los arbustos, los árboles y sus frutos, especialmente las olivas tetudas... La verdad es que tenía bastantes recuerdos en mi joven experiencia para comenzar a desvivirme¹, Y era lo que me sucedía. Fue una cosa que no he acabado de entender. Quizá me iré dando cuenta poco a poco, pero no me queda mucho tiempo para que el proceso sea bastante lento y sustancioso, de modo que no sólo pueda contarle, sino gozarlo. (pp.33-34, Vol.III)

The conclusion was one towards which so very many of his past experiences had pointed, but this was the very first time that he had explicitly acknowledged that dream and reality² would be in constant and inevitable conflict throughout his life. Nowhere previously had he admitted the seriousness and the magnitude of the challenge of objective reality. However, Pepe's dream was released from all restraints: he could devote himself to his memories of Valentina without the preoccupation of integrating them with reality either in the present or the future

¹See above, p.201 and footnote, and p.327 Vol.III.

²Compare Ramiro's conclusion in El verdugo afable (Santiago de Chile, 1952):

...Calderón tenía razón...la vida es...el sueño de nuestro liberación de la ignominia sabiendo al mismo tiempo que esa liberación es imposible. (p.399)

and henceforth his life in respect of Valentina would be characterised by a certain stability and would be without the frustrations he had known in the past. Nowhere is this better shown than in the occasion when Pepe went to see Valentina in Panticosa.

In Panticosa the physical absence of Valentina proved no obstacle to Pepe's overwhelming sense of the reality of her presence. In the propitious circumstances of an expected meeting with her, he bypassed and overcame the limitations of reality. Furthermore, as pure projected essence, unrecognised as such by Pepe, Valentina was more subtly supportive than ever she had been before. In her presence Pepe became all he had ever wanted to be and all that was shameful in his past was somehow blotted out:

Lo más curioso era que en las palabras de ella me veía yo más cumplido y gozoso. Veía el Pepe Garcés que habría querido ser, al que estaba renunciando quizá. O tal vez no. Oyendo a Valentina, yo me asombraba de mí mismo, y lo digo en serio. Yo no había renunciado. No he renunciado aún. Era como si no hubiera hecho nada con Isabelita en Alcannit. (P.103 vol.III)

But it was not simply in that that her support lay, nor even in the fact that he felt himself omniscient and fully integrated into the world (p.110), nor that Valentina's criticisms of Pilar and her husband (p.107, Vol.III) and her understanding of the power and invincibility of her relationship with Pepe (p.108, Vol.III) corresponded respectively to the admired words of Checa and Pepe's own sentiments on the subject (e.g. pp.426-427 Vol. II). Her prime support lay in her being at one and the same time the exact projection of Pepe's feelings and also, while the illusion lasted, something external to him, from which if necessary he could dissociate himself. She was entirely malleable to his psychological needs in a way that a real

person could never have been. Prior to the hallucination the narrator made clear that thoughts of Valentina caused the younger Pepe to revert to a certain extent to his childhood conception of things:

Debo advertir - si no lo ha percibido ya el que lee - que cuando me acercaba a Valentina creía como cuando era niño en el cielo, el purgatorio y el infierno, aunque el primero no me inspirara esperanza alguna ni el último, temor.
(p.97, Vol.III)

In the course of the hallucination, helped by doña Julia's comment that Valentina had not grown up mentally (pp.98-99, Vol. III), Pepe was able to project onto Valentina all his reservations associated with his own reversion to childhood. Even though Valentina was nothing more than a subjective projection of Pepe's own, and in Panticosa everything she said corresponded to views Pepe himself had formerly expressed! Thus at the beginning of his hallucination Valentina was made to give Pepe an overwhelming sense of the rightness of his life and views, and towards the end, to rid him of any reservations about those views he still had. Of course, if associations of mental infancy had come to be permanently attached to the figure of Valentina after the hallucination, his image of her would be seriously impaired. This could not be allowed to happen, so Pepe conveniently forgot all about Valentina's lack of mental development, and as soon as the hallucination was over he never again referred to it. The selective filters of his memory subsequently allowed him to recall the meeting without any pain or disquiet. The efficacy and ingenuity of the psychological defence mechanism associated with Pepe's establishing some kind of equilibrium between his subjective world and the world around him are again extraordinarily exemplified. The world was much more complicated and the demands of his conscious mind much more

considerable than they were when he was in his native village or Reus, but Pepe's unconscious mind had again and most effectively risen to the challenge. The hallucination puzzled him but left him with a relative calm that lasted him for several years. Unbeknown to Pepe, Valentina had become for him a pure, Platonic essence, and it was for this reason that during his telephone conversation with her after the hallucination he had had no curiosity for her real whereabouts or future:

Valentina había quedado al margen del tiempo, pero en el espacio aunque éste no podría ser nunca exactamente determinable. ¿Bilbao? ¿San Juan de Luz? De pronto recordaba que no le había preguntado sobre sus propósitos - ciertos o no - de hacerse monja. Yo mismo no podía entender mi falta de curiosidad. (pp.116-117, Vol.III)

There was no possibility of dialogue with a Platonic essence, so all attempts at communication were doomed to failure, setting aside the impossibility of expressing anything transcendental through the real and human medium of language:

...me ponía a escribir en un cuaderno de apuntes una carta que nunca terminaba. (p.117. Vol.III)

En mi cuaderno de notas intentaba a veces un poema pensando en Valentina: no llegaba más allá del tercer verso. La quería demasiado para escribir poemas... (p.119, Vol.III)

But if the events of Alcañiz had the long predictable effect of finally converting the real Valentina into a pure idea, something which as we have seen was not without certain advantages, they left the rest of Pepe's life in something of a mess. So much he had believed in and thought had been associated with her, that when the possibility of building his real life upon her and a real relationship with her was denied, his situation became similar to that of an exile¹, with all his

¹In Ensayos sobre el infrngimiento cristiano, Sender suggests the human condition may be regarded as one of exile: Platón fue el verdadero formulador de la metafísica de oriente y el que la puso al alcance primero de los estoicos y luego de los cristianos... Fue Platón el primero que dijo (en

allegiance to another country he had been forced to abandon. The inadequacy and confusion of his values in that other country were apparent both in Alcañiz and Madrid. Since his relationship with Valentina had begun and developed within a Catholic middle class context, when she became pure immutable idea, many of the values and prejudices associated with that context became immutable in Pepe's mind, and they often came into conflict with thoughts, feelings and values of more recent origin. Pepe became aware of the overwhelming force of his childhood values when he began to contemplate briefly and not altogether seriously, perhaps, building his life among the olive pickers whom he admired very considerably and whose capacity for enjoyment and happiness had astounded him (pp.28-30 Vol.III):

Pensaba, a veces, incluso que sería agradable quedarse allí y ser uno más entre los allegadores y vivir todo el día con el sol en los brazos desnudos, dormir con seguridad y la salud de los rústicos y beber buen vino y comer buen pan. Pero pensaba todo esto ya sin inocencia. Como burgués estragado que se pone a soñar con la utópica edad de oro.
(p.41 Vol.III)

¹Middle class values associated with the idea of Valentina interfered as much with that possibility, as they did in his recognition

occidente) que esta presencia nuestra en la tierra es un destierro. Yo también lo creo desde que me di cuenta de que nuestra patria está en ese lugar indefinible para nosotros donde Cristo (nuestra creación) es y desde donde Cristo (producto de nuestra voluntad de fe) nos presenta y orienta en la dirección de un bien impersonal. Impersonal como El mismo.
(p.125)

¹In Peñuelas: Conversaciones Sender makes the following declaration about himself:

La gente cree que yo soy un héroe, un tío misterioso, que fue vagabundo durante años en la juventud...A mí me duele rectificar todo eso, pero es más honrado decir la verdad. Yo soy un pequeño burgués, poco más o menos como cualquier lector... (p.256)

Even after allowing for exaggeration in this declaration, the reader is able to see in it confirmation, if confirmation was required, of the ease with which Sender could identify, at least partially, with one so tied to middle-class values as Pepe.

of the unique combination of honesty and realism represented by Bibiana (cp. P.39 and P.40 Vol.III): he had middle class conceptions of dirty language, which nothing could overcome. His adult mind could be extremely critical of the social prejudice his brothers and sisters showed to him as chemist's assistant (pp.37-38, Vol.III), but essentially his own view was the same as their's; when he inherited twenty thousand pesetas from his grandfather, he did not hesitate for a moment in what to do with the money:

Con aquel dinero trataría yo de redimirme de la dura y un poco humorística profesión de mancebo de botica.
(p.35 Vol.III)

The point is Pepe's acquaintance with Checa in Zaragoza, his working as a chemist's assistant, and his acquaintance with people such as Isabel, Bibiana and Trini had given him the opportunity denied so many people with middle-class views, of overcoming his prejudices. In many instances, temporarily at least, he had been able to do so. But the overwhelming influence of the idea of Valentina kept on making him slip back. Of course the major area in which Pepe's childhood background associated with the immutable idea of Valentina interfered with the world of his more mature experience and thought was sex. As we saw in Los niveles in certain respects Pepe's attitude towards sex was the same as it had been when he was a small boy, viz., it was sinful and wrong to lift up a girl's skirt. This attitude continued into Los términos and with it the associated moral distinction between upper and lower Aragon, the former linked to angels and Valentina, the latter to Isabel and sex. The distinction of course did not bear much analysis, and Pepe became ludicrous in his attempts to make the character of his Madrid landlady (who came from Jaca), and the jealous behaviour and cruel tricks

of the young men from Ainsa, square with what he claimed to be the moral qualities of the people from Upper Aragon (see, respectively pp.49, 93 and 94 Vol.III). Pepe registered the evidence refuting his views, but the latter were so deeply held that he did not change them. Thus he came to abuse the women he went to bed with in Madrid as thoroughly as he had done Isabel in Alcañiz. Some conscious effort was required for this, as the following quotation indicates, but Pepe's obvious consciousness of exploitation in no way checked his doing so:

Aprenbí...a desvalorar a todas las mujeres menos a la mía genuina; es decir, a Valentina. Lo malo era que desdeñándolas a todas no dejaba de buscarlas afanosamente y de acostarme con las que me aceptaban. (p.67 Vol.III).

When the appeal of novelty in sexual relations had diminished so too did his ability to accommodate sexual pleasure within a value structure that accorded them importance, and Catholic middle-class attitudes associated with Valentina came to dominate entirely:

...iba haciéndome tan escéptico en materia amorosa, que apenas si pensaba en mí mismo sino como se puede pensar en un cerdo.¹ Los cerdos también deben ver las estrellas cuando alzan la cabeza. (p.79 Vol.III).

With Valentina changed from a potential, real partner into a pure idea, then, his day to day existence was left hollow and

¹Sender's post Civil War attitudes often appear to be a synthesis or compromise in respect of extreme and mutually exclusive points of view he had formerly held. Thus whereas in Carta he vigorously attacked certain kinds of idealism in love - kinds of idealism with which it would appear he had once felt considerable sympathy -, in Tres ejemplos, he suggests that both idealism and sexuality have a crucial place in love:

Pues bien, la experiencia propia y la aprendida en los libros nos dice que, ante la experiencia prometedora o amenazadora (ambas cosas, más probablemente) del amor, lo mejor es mirar cautamente hacia dentro y percatarse de que cada uno de nosotros (en lo que a la vida de las pasiones se refiere) somos un ángel montando una bestia. Frecuentemente una bestia apocalíptica y de una fealdad indescriptible. En todo caso, el ángel y la bestia van unidos como el hombre y el caballo en el centauro. Como el hombre y la cabra en el sátiro. (p.198)

empty. The major principle underlying his choice of a university course¹ was the desire to avoid evil (p.47 Vol.III) - this from the Pepe who had entertained hopes of redeeming humanity and bettering its lot! Very little succeeded in engaging his interest or attention:

La depresión que me producía el apartamiento de Valentina influía en todas las cosas y desconfiaba vagamente de todo y en todo creía vagamente como amaneciera el día.
(p.51, Vol.III).

Chance rather than personal inclination determined how he spent most of his time and with whom?

Ya en Madrid, sin dejar de pensar en Valentina, volví poco a poco a mis dos maneras usuales de actividad: la Escuela de Ingenieros...y el azar. Este podría ofrecerme una tarde de discusiones en la federación local de sindicatos o el encuentro con alguna mujer. En general, no las buscaba, pero tomaba alguna si por una razón u otra se me ofrecía. La posibilidad de amar a cualquier otra mujer que no fuera Valentina me parecía, sin embargo, absurda.
(p.116, Vol.III).

His interest in anarchism, reawakened by his meeting with Valentina, proved to be very different from what it had been with Palmar and Checa. It related not to any conviction that anarchism served the interests of "el hombre, la sociedad y la nación" (p.122, Vol.III) which he did not believe it did, nor yet that anarchist ideology was the product of valid or careful analysis, which he did not believe it was, but to its quixotic idealism:

Yo me sentía un poco romántico arriesgando algo un aquellas aventuras...No es preciso añadir que si la voluntad de aquellos hombres (los anarquistas) era admirable, la mente y el raciocinio no lo eran tanto. Padecían un poco la locura sublime del caballero de la Mancha. (p.122, Vol.III)

Unconsciously perhaps, Pepe was drawn to anarchism by what it had in common with his own past and present attitude to Valentina:

¹Unlike Pepe, Sender enrolled in Madrid University to study law (King: op.cit., pp.18-19). He did not complete his course. (Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.80.)

neither life nor death nor anything had any importance in comparison with the all important ideal.. Theology and theosophy had very much the same appeal. Thanks to books on them as well, of course, as his general lack of interest in the real world Pepe was able to spend two months in gaol¹ not only without discomfort, but with positive pleasure:

La teología y la teosofía me dieron la impresión de ser algo así como la anarquía de lo absoluto. Era más que divertido. Era orgiástico, especialmente los días de viento en el alero. (p.124, Vol.III)

..(lo absoluto, el misticismo y la anarquía) tienen un común denominador: subordinar el instinto de conservación al sentido de la libertad². De una libertad trascendente o inmanente. (p.125, Vol.III).

¹Whereas Pepe was uninterested in his immediate situation whilst in gaol, Sender used the material of his experience there in 1927 in a vigorous attack upon the prison system and of the society that organised it, O.P.. A slightly modified version of the same attack delivered this time by Ramiro Vallemediano is to be found in The Affable Hangman, see above p.44. (For Sender's experience in prison, see Peñuelas: Conversaciones p.85 and La obra narrativa, p.23).

²There is a very interesting parallel between, what we can now see as a tension underlying Sender's pre-Civil War expression of views on love in Carta, and a similar pre-Civil War tension in respect of his views on anarchism. Siete domingos rojos is critical of Samar's girl friend's adherence to middle-class conceptions of love and particularly of her final suicide, seeing it as a purely negative response. On the other hand, the last two pages of the book make quite clear that the anarchists' aspirations to total liberty were as idealistic as Amparo's conceptions of love and equally likely to end in suicide or death. Both she and they were equally disposed to subordinate the survival instinct to an ideal. The second term of Sender's mental conflict in respect of the anarchists, who in Siete domingos rojos he presented very sympathetically, is apparent in the fact that he later dissociated himself from them on account of their inefficiency and impracticality, of which their disposition to suicide and death must surely have been an important factor.

Similarly, during his military service in Morocco, though Pepe registered corruption and incompetence in the Spanish Army and went so far as considering making a protest (p.125, Vol.III) what really engaged his attention was not the general situation in Morocco nor the rights and wrongs of the Spanish presence there, but the particular case of one man, Alfonso Madrigal, whose life-story¹ made him think of love and his relationship with Valentina. And even within Madrigal's life-story, Pepe's interest was selective: he identified with Madrigal as lover and victim rather than resolute fighter against misfortune. At the time Pepe spoke with him Madrigal was determined to put into practice the advice of the ruthless yet dignified Lucas Viñuales, whose philosophy of life, within the conditions obtaining in Morocco, had something to commend it. He was determined to realise his ideal in the real world. But such were Pepe's priorities and values that he ignored everything that was secondary to Madrigal's description of his love ideal and how it had enhanced and dignified his life. Pepe was as deaf to the lessons Madrigal's story offered as he had been to the value of his grandfather's example and advice.

¹Substantially the account of Madrigal's life and misfortunes in Morocco presented in Crónica is the same as that given in the short story Cabrerizas Altas (Mexico, 1965). The only differences lie in the fact that in the short story, Madrigal has no audience to comment on what he says or to relate to it, and that the Crónica version attenuates or omits one or two of the original details with the general effect of making him a more human, pathetic and less cynical person.

The differences between the attitudes and behaviour of Sender and Pepe in Morocco are as great as those when the two men were in gaol. Out of Sender's military service in Morocco, 1923-1924 (King: op.cit., pp.19-20), came Imán, a mighty denunciation of corruption and injustice in the army, relating them to fundamental injustices and conflicts in Spanish society at large. To such an extent is Imán related to general questions with regard to Spanish society in the early part of the twentieth century that few would have quarrelled with the author if he had placed Imán alongside those other novels to which he gave the general title Los términos.

Pepe's relative obliviousness to the external world was again apparent when he returned to Spain and the agitated scene of its politics - the Second Republic was declared shortly after he arrived. For a very brief period thoughts of Valentina gave him some distress: he heard that she had become a novice in a convent and he had reached the time in his life when, many years before, he imagined he would be sufficiently established for there to be a real possibility of his marrying the girl. But characteristically, he gained respite from his anguish not by reference to the external world or by seriously applying himself to the practical problem of winning Valentina but by reflecting on others who had felt equally or more out of tune with the real world:

Estaba desesperado y para evitar la ruina moral pensaba en algún otro individuo más desgraciado que yo. No se trataba tanto de desgracia como de perplejidad. Pensaba en alguno que no había podido sobreponerse a su perplejidad y decidió poner fin a su vida como el de las iniciales R.I.P. Algún desgraciado abismal y definitivo. Yo también podría aullar como él - como un perro - en mis soledades. Sin dejar de ser relativamente feliz.

O ir hasta el fin por el mismo camino que fue él. Pero con una gran felicidad más grande que mi vida que no me servía para nada. (p.226, Vol.III).

R.I.P. was in many ways a bad example, for his despair was real and his similarity to Pepe limited. The unfortunates who most engaged Pepe's attention and interest were young men of his village who had committed suicide with calm and in accordance with local traditions. As Pepe saw it, those suicides were reasonable acts (p.229, Vol.III) which reintegrated the private subjective worlds of the men concerned, who had resolved on suicide precisely because their private world was at odds with the reality of others, into a reality commensurate with their vision:

Los suicidas, al llegar a lo alto de las ripas,

habían salido ya en realidad del mundo y estaban en una especie de limbo desde donde se veía la tierra áspera y cruel...

Desde aquel limbo de las ripas la idea de volver otra vez al pueblo y entrar en las pequeñas miserias de cada día debía parecer incongruente y sin sentido. Así pues una vez arriba, saltar por el tozal redondo era continuar el viaje "hacia arriba" también. Es decir, que desde el tozal arrojaban el cuerpo abajo, pero el alma se quedaba tal vez para siempre en aquellas alturas arrastrada por el viento rasante y ululador de los sasos.

(p.228, Vol.III)

Pepe's conviction that happiness rather than despair filled the minds of these suicides during their last moments is conveyed not only through his various references to their "felicidad secreta, implícita" (p.229, Vol.III). Throughout his life high places and upward movements had had dizzy and pleasingly awesome associations. The movement of stage scenery had impressed him enormously (p.172, Vol.I) when he was acting in La vida es sueño. El santo del paraguas who had fears of being swept up to heaven before his time, was one of the very few people whom Pepe had respected in Alcañiz. And the higher regions of Upper Aragon, partly because they had been associated with Valentina filled him with a kind of ecstatic madness:

A medida que se sube montaña arriba, se va haciendo la naturaleza y la gente de Aragón más silenciosa. Hay días de aire quieto en las alturas de Gratal, en que el silencio nos pone el corazón en un puño. Hay lugares tan grandiosos que dan ganas de llorar. No de tristeza ni de alegría, sino de una especie de locura que nos viene cuando tenemos la sospecha de haber rebasado lo humano y de encontrarnos en esos espacios neutros donde se es más que hombre y menos que Dios y solo se puede callar o llorar, o tal vez dar alaridos como los lobos.

(p.296, Vol.II)

These then were the feelings that Pepe interpreted the suicides of his village as having. It is a highly moot point whether his interpretation bore a close relation to reality, but his interpretation is extremely revealing from the point of view of Pepe's own psychology; first, because he basked in feelings and thought rather than applying himself to practical problems when

gripped by despair vis a vis Valentina; secondly, those feelings and thoughts related to abandoning the real world entirely and thirdly, such a prospect was extremely pleasing to him and rather than signifying the end of a life of frustration he seemed to see it as an ecstatic consummation.

Such was Pepe's attachment to his own internal world and so large a place in his consciousness was occupied by his own problem that, as in his interpretation of the thoughts and feelings of suicides, his interpretation of aspects of the political crises of the Spanish Republic contained almost as much projection as objective analysis. In point of fact, though, there was some objective validity in his analysis. (Menos Ramón shared Pepe's view and Pepe's relationship with his father was a supremely typical Spanish phenomenon). The major problem concerning extremist groups, who during the period of the Republic were unwilling to use the channels of parliamentary democracy, Pepe saw as that of potential suicides like himself:

...monárquicos o republicanos se toleraban recíprocamente y la dificultad comenzaba con las tendencias extremistas. Allí estaban dispuestos al combate los teorizantes más irreductibles con sus doctrinas de segunda mano; es decir llegadas de Berlín de Roma o de Moscú, y dispuestos a todo. En las calles había tumultos y atentados, en el Congreso amenazas sangrientas, todo el mundo parecía tan loco como Manuel y como él ululaban en los mítines aunque no hiciera viento. El que más y el que menos estaba preparando también su salto en el vacío y eligiendo la boina, la piedra y el cigarrillo votivo. (p.230, Vol.III)

And Pepe saw in the philosophy of Spinoza a solution to the political problems of Spain (p.251). Undoubtedly what appealed to Pepe was the mystical side of Spinoza's ethics which brought to his mind his relationship with Valentina, as the following passage taken from his Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione¹

¹Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione (tr. W. Hale White, London 1899).

indicates:

...love for an object eternal and infinite feeds the mind with joy alone, and a joy which is free from all sorrow. This is something which is greatly to be desired and to be sought with all our strength. (p.5)

But, though Bronco's marriage to Cristeta could be interpreted as being a Spinozian progression from a low level of perfection to a higher one (p.250. Vol.III) and therefore responsible for the successful channelling of his negative aggressiveness, and though Pepe's own Spinozian vision of Valentina was indeed, as we have seen, able to relieve much of his frustration and distress in the real world, the possibilities of the general application of Pepe's solution were highly unlikely. Pepe could only see things in terms of individual problems and he had no conception at all of the practical aspect of the solution he offered. How could he ever have convinced the various conflicting factions of Spain to follow Spinoza's ethics? And how would he ever be able to reconcile what would undoubtedly be conflicts between different concepts of the eternal and infinite? Dominated as he continued to be by his ideal image of Valentina, Pepe's attachment to and understanding of, the real world was not profound. What is remarkable about Pepe in Los términos and it cannot be overemphasised is that following his traumatic experiences in Alcañiz he did achieve his own, peculiar and happy adjustment to reality. It was very special to him, it involved his closing his eyes to a lot of the real world and it was not without problems for it left many of his values, which had been formed in association with her, in a mess. But it did proportion him with notable consolations. His relative happiness and stability after Valentina had become a pure ideal for him was considerably greater than it had been before, as a comparison between his

state of mind at the end of Los niveles with his state of mind in Los términos, after Alcañiz, makes very clear.

If the Los términos section of Pepe Garcés' memoirs, then, offers little illumination in respect of political events in Spain during the period from Primo de Rivera's pronunciamiento up to immediately before the Spanish Civil War, it tells us a lot about Pepe's adjustment to reality and about his priorities and his values. Through the artifice of the memoirs structure, and without violence to it, the author is able to clarify as much through the things which did not interest him as through those that did, through the values he accepted as through those - such as Lucas Viñuales' - which he ignored and rejected. The whole process might be termed the placing of Pepe Garcés as a now formed personality, which is not at all to say a moral and psychological assessment of Pepe. As has been stated before Crónica is not a work in which the author makes value judgments on either Pepe Garcés or anyone else. One could say that through Crónica Pepe emerges as a value system in his own right. Numerous points of comparison exist to show what he is and what he is not, but they serve to illuminate rather than judge him. A further and extremely important part of the placing of Pepe Garcés remains to be examined viz. his meeting and commenting upon various people with the name of Ramón.

The Ramón phenomenon is clearly very significant in the first instance, from the point of view of Pepe Garcés. That Pepe should manifest such an extraordinary interest in a number of people who in various ways resembled him (pp.231-2 Vol.III) adds to the evidence that has already been adduced as to the relatively hermetic nature of Pepe's mind:

Yo...era del género pánfilo y admiratorio. Admiraba

fácilmente, sobre todo, como se puede suponer, a aquéllos que por una causa u otra creía que se parecían a mí. (p.62 Vol.III)

(Not all the people of this kind were called Ramón. El loco Manuel and Madrigal fit into the same category.) These people shared one or both of Pepe's two major conscious concerns - his relationship to reality and his conception of love. There was occasionally other common ground, but it tended to be of rather less importance. This suggests that Pepe was not alone in his problems and that Crónica should be considered as rather more than an individual case history. The author states as much in a footnote to a later notebook, La orilla:

...la guerra destruye al débil y fortalece al fuerte. No es que yo fuera más fuerte que Pepe Garcés, pero él estaba enfermo. Uno de los dos (pienso ahora) debía morir y murió él. Con él quedó una gran parte de mi lastre dificultoso, que me habría embarazado en mis movimientos por la vida. Es decir, por este lento desvivirse que ha sido luego la vida para mí. Al hablar de aquel amigo no hablo de su personalidad aislada y concreta, sino de todos los otros españoles que salieron conmigo y que habiendo visto también el vacío absoluto tuvieron que sucumbir. -R.S. (p.330 Vol.III)

Of all the people who interested Pepe, Ramón I had the most similar background: parental conflict, schoolboy involvement in strikes in Zaragoza, early bachillerato graduation, work as chemist's assistant. It was not surprising that Pepe should speak of Ramón I as a mirror image of himself, (p.53-Vol.III).

On the subject of Pepe's love for Valentina there are important similarities between the views and behaviour of the two men: the misgivings Pepe himself had registered in respect of his behaviour towards the women he slept with in Madrid¹ were matched by Ramón's criticisms of him, and Pepe had learnt to despise all women except Valentina (p.67 Vol.III) from Ramón I who furthermore had a girl-friend whose identity and acquaintance he kept as secret as Valentina's:

¹See above p. 224.

A mi amigo Ramón le hería un poco el que yo tuviera simillamores. El tenía su dulcinea secreta no sé dónde (a nadie la presentaba nunca) y por una foto que vi era una hembra primorosa. (p.66 Vol.III)

There was a certain energy in Ramón I that was perhaps lacking in Pepe, and this gave a certain authority, which demanded attention, when he pronounced on Pepe's love life or other matters. The general impression he gave was that, though beset by some of the same problems as Pepe and though often sharing similar views, his greater vigour provided him with more possibilities of success in the face of his existential problems.

Ramón Cero was rather different. He shared Pepe's parental conflicts and had a similarly impossible love (p.71 Vol.III). As with Pepe, the latter had the effect of making his attachment to the real world weak, and rendering much of his daily existence insubstantial:

...aquel Ramón Cero no estaba seguro de vivir y a veces decía de sí mismo que era un fantasma. Entonces yo le preguntaba en broma si tenía necesidades menores y mayores, y él decía que sí, pero que el cuerpo era un autómatas sin importancia habitado por un fantasma atrapado entre el cero y el círculo de lo absoluto; es decir, entre la mecánica del cuerpo - al que llamaba la máquina de la risa - y el espíritu. (p.70, Vol.III)

Pepe's lack of serious political involvement was matched by a certain political frivolousness in Ramón Cero:

... fue a Madrid y consiguió un puesto en el Herald, diario de la noche, populachero y izquierdista y barbian. La irresponsabilidad de los redactores de aquel diario formaba ya leyenda en la vida cortesana. Mi amigo solía reírse de sí mismo y como hacía otro trabajo en un diario de derechas (en la Epoca), decía que era ambidiestro porque trabajaba con la derecha y la izquierda. (p.71, Vol.III)

On balance Ramón Cero gave the impression of being somewhat despicable. Pepe had never ceased to be innocuous, nor did he give the impression that he ever would. Beset by the same problems, Ramón Cero looked as though frustration and indifference

to the real world might seriously change him for the worse.

In contrast Ramón III/IV applied himself to the resolution of his problems more actively. Sharing Pepe's conviction that destiny took an anthropomorphic interest in what he did, exploiting it in accordance with its own designs, Ramón sought to manipulate destiny to his own advantage (p.85 Vol.III). After initial success, his efforts brought about his own downfall in a tragic though unspecified way:

Yo me quedé asustado un día cuando vi que a pesar de las cosas que aquel Ramón III o IV - no recuerdo el orden - decía contra sí mismo, iba aureolándose con un halo virtuoso¹. Lo contrario de lo que solía suceder con aquellas personas que dedicaban su vida a demostrar que eran mejores que sus vecinos. Pero un día lo empitonó bien el toro. Y para siempre. (p.85-86 Vol.III).

Pepe had never used such techniques. His early approach, which he later came to modify, had been to pay no attention to the possible practical consequences of his actions: this had plunged him into deep water with regard to Valentina's family (see the end of La onza) and, on another occasion, precipitated Idabel's dismissal (pp.22-23, Vol.III) from her job. The greatest sophistication Pepe had ever shown was in disguising from Palmar his personal interest in the date of the olive pickers' strike, (pp.25-26 Vol.III) thus preventing the latter from being a potentially obstructive instrument of destiny. All in all, Pepe gives the impression of being less simplistic and naive than Ramón III/IV.

By far the cleverest of the men with the name of Ramón was Menos Ramon. Pepe admired him very much and found his remarks on the presaged war most penetrating:

¹Compare Spic's experience in Emen hetan, p.139.

Cuando la cultura se hace demasiado subjetiva y los hombres creen sólo en sí mismos (en los frutos de su imaginación y de su conciencia), entonces viene una guerra para recordarles la inmanencia del orbe.
(p.232 Vol.III)

Ramón's scepticism in respect of the concepts used by many politicians (p.232 Vol.III) was identical to what Pepe had expressed on previous occasions (e.g. p.72 Vol.III) and the coincidence of their points of view on the negativism and individualism of Spanish politicians was such that on occasions one wonders for a moment who is speaking. But Pepe's admiration for Menos Ramón was accompanied by a deep and rather irrational distrust. Menos Ramón's intelligence seemed almost satanic¹. He was totally successful in manipulating destiny: not only was he able to avoid the misfortune that destroyed Ramón III/IV, but he gained considerable benefits. (Seemingly this was due to the flexibility of his approach to destiny and his keen awareness of the dangers his manipulations might cause (p.231 Vol.III)). But all the benefits had drawbacks. It was he, for example, who inspired Pepe's deadly pistol:

Menos Ramón estaba siempre poniendo estímulos en mi cerebro y dándome quehacer. La pistola química, como digo, vino de él. Es decir, de una sugestión suya. Tenía que venir de un enfadado, es decir, de un hombre en colisión con los hados. O en secreto malsano con ellos. (p.231, Vol.III)

¹The radicalism of Menos Ramón's ideas puts one in mind of both Spic and Cagliostro - in respect of Emen hetan and Las criaturas - both of whom were extremely scornful of notions of Divine Beneficence. In respect of Las criaturas, it is illuminating to note the similarity between the views of Menos Ramón, who was planning to write a book entitled El pensamiento negativo como elemento creador (p.31 Vol.III), and some of those underlying Sender's conception of the title of Las criaturas, to which reference has already been made (see above p.117). Certainly a number of Sender's post-Civil War novels seem to have been written with the object of inviting the reader to examine the subtlety and complexity of the relationship between good and evil, what is positive and what is negative, and of Emen hetan it may be said that Sender sought through the presentation of views that were largely untrue and invalid, - Spic's - to enable the reader to form views of his own that were true and valid.

And though the idea for the pistol was inspired and brilliant, and though Menos Ramón, who urged Pepe to develop the pistol and exploit it commercially, was therefore the only person who had ever placed the practical possibility of winning over Valentina's family and marrying the girl within Pepe's reach, the pistol was a singularly treacherous and deadly weapon. Pepe was unable to refute Menos Ramón's arguments - he countered on esthetic grounds or through bald assertion (p.232 Vol.III) - but instinctively he felt he was wrong and such a procedure for winning the girl altogether incompatible with all that Valentina represented. In the final analysis, Menos Ramón stands as an equivocal figure, his considerable intelligence and understanding counter balanced by the suspicion of an inclination towards moral turpitude, and Pepe, whose intelligence perhaps lacked the fine edge of Menos Ramón's, found that when he argued in the same manner as his friend, his arguments became sophistical:

Mi pistola habría ayudado a reducir la tendencia a la superpoblación que va a arruinar a la humanidad un día. Es decir, que en definitiva con ese invento mío yo podía hacer bien a los hombres. Pero todo eso era puro sofisma. (p.245 Vol.III)

Ramón VIII and Ramón Irazábal Pando¹ (Ramón V/VI) while sharing Pepe's idyllic conception of love, knew a kind of frustration quite different from his: their partners were unfaithful. In the case of Ramón V/VI this led to his suicide (p.133 Vol.III), whereas Ramón VIII imposed fines, in the form of debts which he did not repay, on his beloveds.

Ramón IX and Ramón Dodge were two men whose lives were changed when their ideal or notion of their human potential came into violent confrontation with objective reality. During the

¹Ramón Irazábal Pando is also presented as a suicide in Nocturno de los 14 (New York, 1959 pp.159-166).

early part of the Civil War Ramón IX had shown notable bravery but he changed considerably after being wounded (pp.526-527 Vol.III). Thereafter he looked to his own self-interest, by exploiting his wound and seeking to become an idle, roguish aristocrat. Ramón Dodge was rather different. After a youth devoted to theosophy and mysticism, in his relationship with his wife he felt himself frustrated in his desire to transcend and decided to conduct an experiment to determine the existence or non-existence of external reality. The experiment consisted in his throwing himself out of the window of an express train travelling at full speed. Though the detail of Ramón's thought following this experiment is not made clear, he evidently came to abandon all interest and belief in transcendence and became a successful business man.

For the significance of Ramón Sender, the most important of the men called Ramón whom Pepe met, see below.

If all the Ramón figures mentioned hitherto quite conspicuously shared some of Pepe's problems and in one way or another bore similarity to him to the extent that his interest in them seems fully justified, the same cannot be said of Ramón II, Ramón Pérez de Ayala, Ramón Gómez de la Serna and Ramón Valle-Inclán. In respect of such men, objectively speaking, their only place in the picture, and that a small one, seemed to lie in their relation not to Pepe Garcés but to the other men with the name of Ramón. Pepe met them it is true, but it was with the Ramones they shared a name and literary interests, not with Pepe. Pepe's belief in their significance for him is not borne out by the evidence and seems the product of an obsession. The same may be said of his conviction, which he does not

substantiate that all the Ramones bore him considerable ill-will:

Tenía yo más o menos cerca de mí en aquella época varios Ramones. Siete si la memoria no me falla. Un buen número de Ramones, el siete. (Más tarde supe que todos querían matarme a mí.) (pp.231-232 Vol.III)

The explanation of Pepe's feeling undoubtedly lies in his later acquaintance with Ramón Sender, which will be discussed extensively at a later stage. (It is crucial to clarify at this point that the Ramón Sender Pepe meets is not the author, he is a character. He has neither omnipotence nor omniscience, and should be regarded as Pepe's equal.) Pepe Garcés and Ramón Sender, on that occasion, were shown to have as much if not more in common than Pepe and each of the other Ramones. However, as much because of their similarities as perhaps because of their differences, and extraordinary mutual antagonism developed between the two men. Each of them obviously felt threatened by the other and nothing less than mutual hatred came to separate them. This hatred of Pepe's then came to be extended to include all the other Ramones. Pepe came to see that their lives constituted variations on the theme of his life. Initially acquaintance with the Ramones was flattering and reassuring. However, the more he got to know them and the more of them he got to know, the more they seemed to constitute a challenge and a threat. Implicitly, their different values and their different responses to his kind of problem, questioned and criticised his values and responses. And in periods of self-doubt, of which the Civil War was to present many, his antagonism to the Ramones, who represented the whole gamut of past and present possible, though rejected, crucial existential alternatives, understandably became acute. (The Ramones also, in some cases, mirrored how Pepe might have been if events had turned out slightly differently.) To put the matter simply,

Pepe was like the man who having made a crucial, difficult and largely irrevocable decision, in given circumstances, is furious at being reminded of the rich and life-enhancing possibilities his decision has denied him, or how differently things might have turned out in different circumstances.

But the men who exercised such an extraordinary appeal for Pepe were called Ramón, not as might be expected Pepe or José. Furthermore, they all, including Valle Inclán, Pérez de Ayala and Gómez de la Serna, were writers, whereas Pepe was not. That such should be the case, inevitably puts the reader in mind of the author, Ramón Sender, and causes him to relate the Ramones to Sender through their common Christian name and literary bent.

In some cases, even on the scanty biographical information available about Sender, close parallels between the author and various of the Ramones can be established. For example, both Ramón I and the author, after^a similar early life, spent their first months in Madrid living rough, supporting themselves by writing articles¹. Their first published article had the same title and was published in the same paper². They were both anti-monarchical and politically active³. It was not just Pepe Garcés and Ramón Cero who were relatives, but Ramón Cero and the author appeared to be so too⁴. Quite possibly more parallels could be established if we knew more about the author's own life. But the important point does not lie in the number of coincidental biographical details, but more in the general point that there

¹Compare Peñuelas: Conversaciones PP.75-76 and Crónica p.57 Vol.III

²Compare Peñuelas Conversaciones pp.76-77 and Crónica p.57 Vol.III

³Compare Olstad, op.cit., footnote to p.17 and Crónica pp.60-61 Vol.III.

⁴Compare Crónica p.70 Vol.III and Peñuelas: La obra narrativa footnote to p.18.

was something of the author and his life in each of the Ramones.

Sender confirms this in conversation with Peñuelas:

...yo mismo aparezco allí, el autor en el último volumen, discutiendo con Pepe Garcés, y hay una serie de Ramones con diferentes apellidos, cada uno de los cuales representa también algo de mi sentido de las cosas.

(Conversaciones, p.150)

Now from the very first, a link between the author and Pepe Garcés was established through their common names. And this link is further confirmed not only through what both men had in common with the Ramones but by the undeniable fact, which I have substantiated hitherto through footnotes, that important aspects of the life and problems of the author are expressed to the life and psychology of Pepe Garcés. I suggested, see above p.216 and footnote, that Pepe Garcés could be considered as what Sender would have become if he had not changed from the age of seventeen till the time of the Civil War. From this one can deduce that the author, from a retrospective viewpoint, stands in the same relation to Pepe Garcés and all the Ramones (with the exception of the known literary figures, whose function appears at least in part to be to put the reader on the scent of the autobiographical links) as Pepe Garcés does to the Ramones including the character, Ramón Sender. For the author, Pepe Garcés and all the Ramones (with the exception of the character, Sender - the character Sender would appear to represent the author's view at that time - and the other known literary figures) represent what might have been: the gamut of past, possible existential alternatives. Crónica is the account of the development of Pepe Garcés and of the way he adjusted to reality throughout his life, explicitly up to the end of the time period covered by the notebooks and implicitly in the concentration camp of Argelés. The real life Sender

obviously had problems of adjustment during the same time period, and indeed afterwards both in respect of his everyday existence and in respect of his memories. I would suggest that the writing of Crónica constituted for Sender an aid to the resolution of his problems of adjustment in respect of his memories up to the end of the Civil War. Pepe Garcés and the various Ramones represent what might have been, if Sender had made slightly different decisions or if events had turned out slightly differently

(I do not think one needs to give too much exclusive attention to Sender's feelings of guilt in respect of the Civil War¹ in this regard, general feelings of dissatisfaction concerning crucial past events and understandably felt by all sensitive men would be quite sufficient.) A passage from Conversaciones² illustrates what I am trying to say: the general references to "la realidad" and "Lo otro" may be taken as alluding to Sender's memories of the period in question.

Los términos describes the completion of the development of Pepe's personality, with his main traits - a lack of interest in the things of the real world and his belief in Valentina as immutable ideal - clear and unchanging from the time he left Alcañiz up to immediately before the Civil War. The different Ramones, Alfonso Madrigal and el Loco Manuel indicate the general character of Pepe's particular problems of accommodating individual, subjective aspirations within the real world. They also suggest ways in which the merits and defects of Pepe's

¹See Peñuelas: Conversaciones pp.119-120.

²Quoted below, see pp.345-346.

particular accommodation might be viewed. The Ramones also serve to illuminate some of Sender's intentions in writing the novel viz., to write an existentially comprehensive autobiography in which what might have been has a prominent place.

La orilla donde los locos sonríen

If Los términos showed the completion of Pepe's development and made various comments on his new adult personality, La orilla shows how he went on to face the trauma of the first days of the Civil War.

A new manner characterises La orilla, quite different from that of the previous notebooks though part of the last notebook shares it. This manner is intimately related to the nature of the events described as the manuscript collector makes explicit:

En estas páginas parece referirse a la confusión de unos días llenos de extraños dobles y triples fondos difíciles de identificar a la luz del recuerdo para él que no haya pasado medularmente por el mismo calendario... Hay sugerencias e insinuaciones de carácter lírico que entenderán sólo algunos lectores... Las cosas se hacen irreales en el recuerdo de Pepe Garcés, como solía sucederle - el mismo lo dice - cuando veía algo que su razón no podía digerir.

¹The title is based on Pepe's comment on the national situation, following the announcement of the murder of Calvo Sotelo, (pp.279-280 Vol.III). Perhaps unconsciously, Spaniards were hurrying towards a cliff's edge, similar to that from which various young men of Pepe's village had committed suicide (pp.226-230 Vol.III). Only the mad could smile at what was going to happen. The title and Pepe's comment are not only interesting as a censorious view on the portended Civil War, but also as an indication of the beginning of a crucial, if temporary, change in his general attitude. Previously, Pepe had sympathised with the suicides of his village and had contemplated following their example. Now with the Civil War imminent, when what he had contemplated for himself seemed likely to happen on a national scale, he began seriously to revise his opinion. The change in Pepe's view, involving the reconsideration of his attitude to the objective world and his relation to it, occupies, as I indicate, the whole of La orilla and part of La vida.

Sin embargo, ese irrealismo¹ no es un escape a la realidad, sino una integración en ella por la vía esencial de los juegos de símbolos, más entrañable que la del referir visual. En todo caso, yo creo que cuando escribió este capítulo que sigue trató el autor de decir muchas cosas que no se habían organizado demasiado aún en su conciencia con ideas o palabras coordinables. O que - ¿quién sabe - tal vez se habían organizado demasiado y sólo se podían decir parabólicamente para mantener toda su intención. (p.264, Vol.III)

Other passages and other comments, made by Pepe himself in the early part of the notebook, insistently repeat and confirm the editor's crucial point that the "irrealism" of La orilla is not escapist. First, there is the adapted quotation from Book VII of Plato's Republic. It is of little moment whether one follows Pepe's interpretation and sees the whole of mankind in the cave, in which case the irrealism of the notebook would be understood as referring to Pepe's attempts to communicate a highly complex reality, the total perception

¹Difficult, "irrealistic" passages abound in Sender's post-Civil War work. Their presence is related to Sender's view that large areas of reality and human experience are only accessible to man - and then only partially - if he makes full use of all the mental resources at his command - both conscious and unconscious. Sender's esteem for even the bad poet, in so far as the myths he creates enrich and illuminate reality for his readers, see above, p.212 footnote 2, indicates part of his view of the function of literature. The following passages indicate both his conception of the mental source from which the poet draws his illuminating myths and the type of literature he himself has sought to write:

...if we refuse to listen to the subconscious, our subconscious, obscure at times but at times dazzlingly brilliant, in which sleeps the mystery of creation, we reject the great quarry from which that which we call civilization has through the ages mined its materials. A flash of light into this obscure abyss of being - let us agree that it is obscure - may produce nothing more than a mediocre poem, but how many times it has lighted a whole epoch with a richer realization of man and life! And to begin with it is from this abyss that Santa Teresa, Fray Luis de Granada, Cervantes, Rabelais, Shakespeare, Dante draw the substance of their dreams. (p.120)

...it is not the combination of what is already known and put in order, but the ordering of infinite chaos, that comprehends and glorifies all the labor of the poet and the hero and the saint. (p.121)

(Both passages are taken from "On a Really Austere Aesthetic" in Books Abroad, vol.16, no.2, April 1942.)

and understanding of which no one enjoyed, or whether one sees the relationship between Pepe Garcés and the reader as that of Socrates' educators and the men chained in the cave, in which case the difficulties of the irrealism clearly derive from the fact that what is related is outside the reader's experience and normal range of perception. In neither case, is there any need to see wilful escapism in Pepe's narrative manner. In both, an insistence on the difficulty of perceiving and communicating certain kinds of truth. (In a slightly different context one recalls Pepe's resignation to the impossibility of communicating anything to or about Valentina, following his hallucination in Panticosa. See above, p.221). Secondly, there is Pepe's confession that he idealised in the early parts of his memoirs:

Debo confesar que aunque todo lo que he escrito y sigo escribiendo es verdad, he idealizado en los primeros cuadernos un poco - bastante - a mi padre, por diferentes razones. Primero, para hacerlo verosímil, porque si lo presentara como era no lo creería nadie. Segundo, por piedad filial. Tercero, porque haciéndolo un poco más aceptable, la gente que lea estas páginas, si alguien ha de leerlas, nos respetará más-digo, a los exiliados que sobrevivan -. (p.265 Vol.III)

With regard to Pepe's father at least, clearly more truth is to be expressed in the last two notebooks, with their "irrealism", than in the earlier more conventional ones. Particularly significant in the above quotation is Pepe's suggestion, of direct application to La orilla, that unglamorized truth may lack verisimilitude. Quite evidently too, Pepe has become more optimistic with regard to truth: from this point onwards he felt considerably more respect and affection for his father than hitherto and suggests that neither the reputation of his father nor that of other exiles will suffer by the entire unvarnished truth being told. This change in attitude is associated with a change in the object of the memoirs, also of relevance to the narrative.

manner of this section. If the early notebooks with their idealisation and conventional narrative manner, by virtue of accident or Pepe's conscious intention, served as an escape from the horrors of the concentration camp, the Civil War and the news of the fall of Madrid and Valencia, it was Pepe's later hope that the later ones, and, with their corrections and emendations the earlier ones too, would be useful to his readers:

La verdad es que escribo ahora yo también mi desvivirme para dar en unos días y en unas páginas (como el roble quemado al fuego del invierno) mi energía a los otros, para ayudarles y calentarlos con mi testimonio. Para encender un poco la luz con la materia...de mi energía de toda la vida e iluminar así el camino de los otros, aunque sólo sea con la luz de una luciérnaga. Al menos esa luciérnaga verde cerciorará al caminante de que no hay abismo alguno debajo, de que está en tierra firme. Y se habrá encendido con la sustancia de mi presencia. Y habré sido útil. (p.327, Vol.III)

In short, then, the "irrealism" of manner of La orilla reflects the nature of the experience and events which Pepe was seeking to describe. Only in this manner could Pepe convey the horror and confusion of his experiences, and the particular merit of Pepe's chronicle at this point is that the subjective dimension of nightmare and confusion is expressed as an integral part of the events. There is no suspicion of escapism or idealisation, for neither Pepe's new purpose in writing nor his new optimism in respect of truth allowed them.

The richness of Pepe's "irrealistic" manner of narration is admirably demonstrated in the party scene at Manuel Becerra. The historical events of several days - 12th, 13th and possibly 14th July, 1936 - later information relating to the same, and subsequent reflections, fears and interpretations, are all combined together and telescoped into the happenings of one afternoon. In the course of the party not only is the murder

of Calvo Sotelo announced, but the bloody vehicle belonging to the guardias de asalto who had committed the murder is seen returning to Madrid, political speeches disclaiming responsibility are heard, and the gruesome repercussions of the murder including the division of Spain into enemy camps made clearly manifest. There is clearly no realism in the sequence of events, in the extraordinary politicisation and polarisation of persons following the announcement of the murder, in the immediate recognition of its implications, nor in the violent diatribes of the Señora de las voces which touch so accurately and insistently on Pepe's fears and doubts. What there is, is a magnificent synthetic presentation of the historic events of three days and their subsequent objective and subjective repercussions. In memory, years after the events for Pepe, the time scale was telescoped and planes of reality merged together so that he could not separate events from the horror they led to, nor the enormity of what had happened from the point of view of his country from its enormity for him.

The party had begun, as far as Pepe was concerned as a frivolous affair, of frivolous, pretentious people. Nothing there particularly engaged his attention and quite clearly he had gone in the same idle, uninterested spirit with which, since Alcañiz, he had approached most things in life. He had gone hoping to meet one of the Ramones, and once there the presence of a large number of nubile, young girls proved an additional attraction. Nothing could ever have come of the girls' appeal for him, for one thing, they and their mothers were only interested in marriage, for another, as always Valentina monopolised his affections. However, he was conscious of their physical charms and their silliness and the transparency of their intentions evoked in him pathos as well as amusement:

¡Pobres niñas culirrosáceas que estaban en Madrid en la proporción de siete a uno! (siete por cada varón.) Ellas que desnudas de ropa y de manierismos podrían haber enamorado al sultán de Turquía y al sha de Persia! Pero así es la vida. (pp.269-270 Vol.III)

Initially the fact that Pepe, Ramón II and a friend of theirs, the patron of poetry, had little in common either socially or ideologically with the girls and their mothers was of little significance. The light atmosphere of the party, abstracted as it was from any concrete historical or political situation of tension or danger, could easily accommodate differences of this kind. Thus no one remarked upon Ramón II's informal dress or Pepe's distracted state of mind. For similar reasons, from Pepe's point of view, though he had reservations on the subject, he found something innocent in the girls pretentiousness:

Había algo inocente en la cursilería, aunque por cursilería algunas de aquellas niñas serían capaces un día del adulterio, e incluso del crimen, creo yo.
(p.269 Vol.III)

After the announcement of the murder of Calvo Sotelo, everything changed in an extraordinary manner. Pepe sensed that he and Ramón II were regarded with suspicion:

Por el momento, ellas miraban los pantalones de algodón veraniego de Ramón II y parecían estar formando su composición de lugar. Se preguntaban si no formaríamos parte de los grupos agresores y culpables.
(p.274 Vol.III)

And it was not long before more specific insinuations were being made:

Estos jóvenes del balcón me huelen a cuerno quemado y a plebeyez stalina...
(p.279 Vol.III)

The innocuous social activities of the nubile girls changed imperceptibly into something rather menacing as they sang the Materile (see p.163 Vol.III) and Pepe finally came to see that the murder of Calvo Sotelo had provided the catalyst which

would allow innocent elements in the girls to change into something truculent and dangerous:

Las niñas cantoras del matarile eran también sin darse cuenta las prosopopeyas chicas, cada una de las cuales representaba un elemento del día meridiano. Del día infinito con dimensiones interiores, que maduraba. Pili era el azúcar parlante, sólo que como todos los azúcares podía convertirse en el hidrocarburo explosivo (Hidrato de carbono amenazador.)

Las otras, a su modo, tenían también su sentido prosopopeico; por ejemplo Clori - el aceite -, que como todas las grasas combinadas con ciertos ácidos se hacía detonadora. Y Suni y Any, las virguerizantes del cabreo que hablaban y cantaban el matarile como elementos aparentemente neutros que eran de la conflagración que se acercaba, que había comenzado ya. Eran como la glicerina griega con el ácido nítrico de los iberos.

(pp.286-287 Vol.III)

(Much later Pepe came to see pretentiousness, which had initially contributed to the partly innocent appeal of the girls at the party, as something altogether noxious:

Así es que, en el lado republicano y en el nacional, se mataba por cursilería política ... por la nación entera y en su nombre hablaban insolentemente los cursis que seguían la moda del otoño moscovita o de la primavera prusiana. (p.374 Vol.III)

But perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the change brought about by Calvo Sotelo's murder, was the difference it revealed between the, now, antagonistic groups into which the people attending the party fell. Whereas the pathos Pepe had felt for the silly girls intensified when he heard the news and reflected on its implications, (pp.272-273, Vol.III), and whereas both he and Ramón II showed themselves appalled by the prospect of the coming war:

Ramón II - Con la muerte de la noche pasada, la historia va a detenerse. No más progreso, no más libre examen, no más diálogo. Esto es ya la rehostia, el desmigue...

Pepe - Todo el mundo se juega las diez de últimas.

Ramón II - ¿Quién las perderá?

Pepe - Todos las han perdido ya. Los blancos y los negros, los buenos y los protervos. La gente esta corriéndose, sin sentir, hacia la orilla donde los locos sonríen. Cuando esto sucede, se acabó. (pp.279-280, Vol.III)

the attitude of the other group, represented by the Señora de las voces could not be more different. She contemplated the foreseen cataclysm with undisguised glee, seeing in it the opportunity for desirable and vigorous action:

Todavía anda la paz por el coro, pero comienzan en todas partes las discusiones sobre si fue o si vino y los mastuerzos venga a trabarse de palabras. Antes de la noche andaremos a tres menos cuartillo y apuesto a que mañana nos hemos tirado los trastos a la cabeza. Los machos tienen sangre caliente y comienzan a darse de astas, los de un lado con ras, los del otro zarpa a la zarpa. Y a renglón seguido, la artillería en la calle, es decir primero, las tanquetas. Y ustedes, ¿qué hacen allí, gallipavos? Hay que meterse en docena. Eso del párrafo aparte no va conmigo. Ni fríos ne renegados ni apóstatas. La alferecía se impone más o menos provisional como ejemplo de empuje y honrada lidia. Los otros están creciendo como la mala hierba. (p.277, Vol.III)

At no point did feelings of pathos or compassion enter into her mind. Mankind should rejoice at the progress the war would bring:

La nitroglicerina rige el mundo y el mundo empuja la historia. De la guerra salen inventos y de los inventos una guerra nueva y la humanidad no anda marcando el paso sino a trancos y barrancos. ¡Menudo tranco el que ha comenzado hoy, gachó! Vamos a echar con cajas destempladas a todos los zarramplines. Se van a ir con un pie tras otro. (p.285, Vol.III).

Neither Pepe nor Ramón II thought of the Señora and the group she represented as enemies, at least not until violent diatribes were showered on them, nor did they of their own initiative feel any aggression. Their major preoccupation was with the practical and moral preparations they would have to make to face the new situation of danger:

La realidad nos obligaba de pronto a tomar posiciones serias. Nosotros, máquinas de la risa, debíamos, convertimos en príncipes de la seriedad, así de pronto, y no era fácil. (p.271, Vol.III)

Había que situarse. Así dicen los políticos cuando hay un cambio de régimen, o al menos de gobierno. En esos casos situarse representaba adaptarse para evolucionar hacia algo mejor. En el caso presente era más bien eludir la catástrofe. (p.271, Vol.III)

The Señora's comments, directed at Pepe, take up the question of his moral and psychological preparedness for coping with the kind of challenge represented by the new war situation. Though her words, from a general point of view, fit realistically into the framework of the party - she began by considering the implications of the war for all the people present - the detail of her remarks, her intimate acquaintance with Pepe's past, and her immediate recognition that there would be a war, evidently go beyond the bounds of realism. This is an example of Pepe's subsequent fears, doubts and reflections being antedated and incorporated into what, in terms of events, went before. Her strictures, for such they are, as has been stated, touch upon Pepe's most intimate misgivings in respect of himself:

...el caso de estas chicas medionubileras requiere casa y quinquenios. Tú no tienes ni lo uno ni lo otro. Sólo una pistola química y alevosa, que mata sin sangre... Tienes tus fondos falsos, pero de poco te sirve porque yo los veo... Te enamoraste como las plantas que vienen tempranas y se hielan con la primera rosada, así te pasó a ti... Con tu pistola has asentado crédito, pero si no lo empleas no alzarás cabeza de linaje...

Pepe -

Cada cual ha plantado su semilla y ha llegado el momento de verla crecer.

Señora -

¿Qué clase de planta era la tuya? ¿Plantaina para los canarios flauta? ¿Melisa para el agua samaritana contra los nervios? Tu planta era el hálamo de la Meca al que se agarran las cantáridas. Yo sé lo que digo. El amor de los mecatecos por su Dulcinea y, en el otro extremo del espinazo, la herramienta que se excita con la cantárida. Eso es... Te convidaron a ti las culirrosas y acudiste, pero luego te arrepientes de haber venido. Así es todo. Vas y te quedas a mitad de camino. No, no me digas nada. Ya sé que estuviste en la cárcel como cada cual. ¿Qué quiero decir con eso? Sólo una cosa: que te dejaste atrapar como un conejo. Y si eso te suena feo, como un lobo en la trampa. Te dejarás la pata en el cepo si quieres escapar. Tú verás si vale si pena. Porque arrastrando el cepo no podrás seguir mucho tiempo y además no irás muy lejos, creo yo. (pp.285-7, Vol.III).

On reading these words one recalls the conversation between Pepe and Ramón I on the two different principles that have dominated

human history:

Pepe - ...hay dos tendencias en la historia de la humanidad: la del espiritualismo: Buda, el dulce Jesús, San Francisco, Gandhi, y la energía racionalista; es decir, Syva, Maquiavelo, Nietzsche, y...digamos Stalin...

Ramón I - ...Yo diría ... que Jesús y Buda son el principio femenino, la dulzura pasiva y los otros el masculino: Syva, Maquiavelo, Nietzsche, Hitler o Stalin...
(p.249, Vol.III)

The Señora's comments are clearly an expression of the masculine principle and rationalist energy. She is concerned with social political and financial success and indifferent as to means or possible victims. She is scornful for Pepe's not being in a financial position to win any of the girls at the party, for his love for Valentina and the frustrations associated with it, for the pistol he invented but refused to exploit, for his transparency and for having been arrested and imprisoned.

She recognises the concern and compassion he feels in spite of everything, for the girls at the party, and sees such feelings as evidence of weakness of the kind that will destroy him in the new situation. Her remarks correspond to the kind of moral and psychological stock-taking that one might imagine Pepe making in the very earliest stages of the war. Did these key features of his past life suggest a person psychologically and morally prepared for the demand of a war? As Pepe himself had suggested earlier the war required he and others to become a "príncipe de la seriedad". It would no longer be sufficient for him to be in Ramón Cero's phrase "una máquina de la risa" i.e. the type of person for whom day to day living was devoid of significance or value.

A further interest of the comments made by the Señora de las voces lies in the implicit restatement of the crucial ambivalence of Pepe Garcés, on this particular occasion with

reference to the Civil War. From the time he had first known Valentina Pepe's paw had been in the trap. His subsequent intransigence in respect of everything that was not Valentina had made him on occasions ridiculous and inhuman, particularly with regard to sex and Isabel. In terms of moral worth, his life had been singularly ineffective because he had been uninterested in the real world. After leaving Alcañiz he had neither sought nor found ways of expressing his perceptions of immorality and injustice through action and had limited himself to the passive avoidance of evil. He could indeed be criticised on these grounds. On the other hand, that same intransigence had meant that moral preoccupations had always been central to his thoughts and actions. A concern for fundamental principles of justice and humanity made him decide finally and irrevocably that no cause however just or important could ever justify the inhuman treatment of men of the charity and kindness of don Bruno and don Arturo (p.42 Vol.III). Similarly - perhaps too for the extra reason that Pepe saw similarities between them and Valentina (pp.286-287 Vol.III) - no matter what happened he could never cease to feel compassion for girls such as those at the party. Pepe's intransigence and incapacity for adaptation might signify weakness and passivity but they also signified humanity and principles.

It is evident that Pepe represents the feminine passive, spiritual principle in the same way that Señora represents the male principle of rationalist energy. Perhaps the virtues and vices of each of them can be expressed in respect of their departure from the ideal, middle term Ramón I hoped for:

Habría un tercer término; Sócrates. En decir, Platón y Sócrates. (p.249 Vol.III).

Presumably this third term would involve a kind of comprehensive philosophy capable of embracing the whole of reality with understanding and sensitivity. It would be as aware of the world of the senses and the problems associated with it as the world of ideals.

Setting aside the question of the "irrealism" of the narrative manner many aspects of the war situation described in La orilla seemed of themselves unreal or even absurd. The peculiarity and intensity of life in situations of danger often made reality itself take on the attributes of a work of literature, in which the characters could be manipulated or destroyed in accordance with the whims or eccentric logic of an unknown and unpredictable author. It is significant that Pepe should have recourse to a fable relating to the time of the Chinese Civil War to explain the kind of mortal risk that he ran when driving from Madrid in the direction of Barcelona immediately after the war had started:

Recordaba aquel cuento del chinito en tiempos del kuomintang que yendo y viniendo por territorio no identificable, cuando un centinela le daba el alto y le preguntaba: "¿Qué partido?" respondía: "Pues di tú primero." (p.288 Vol.III)

And it is significant, and appropriate, that the two unidentified people involved in the interrogation¹ Pepe overhears at the police-station in Burgos, should fit into symbolic roles like characters in a play. For all its fictional aspect though, that play signifies Pepe's baptism of fire into the realities of the Civil War, where military and personal advantage might be dependent on psychological astuteness or self-sacrifice.

¹The interrogation described here is in fact based on a play Sender wrote, El secreto (Madrid 1935). In the play the secret has to do with preparations for a revolution in Barcelona.

Of course he had already begun to realise something of the demands the war would make upon him and whilst listening to the interrogation dissembled his presence and interest in the proceedings, by projecting himself as the avid reader of frivolous novelettes (p.289 Vol.III). An unexpected aspect of the new reality with its fictional appearance was that it could sometimes be deceptive, in the sense that one forgot its incongruity and absurdity. Thus, when, on leaving the party at Manuel Becerra, Pepe saw a man smashing the windows of a tram with his elbows, he did not pause to think of the reason or meaning of the action but only the good sense of the method:

Lo hacen (sic) con los codos para no costarse las manos con los vidrios. Buena idea. (p.288 Vol.III)

Throughout the country scales of value and orders of priority had been turned upside down and it was difficult for any one person to avoid involvement in the process.

If at the Manuel Becerra party the apparent confusion in the sequence of events and between subjective and objective reality with careful analysis and close reading proved intelligible, the same cannot be said so readily of later sections of the novel. But the hyper-diffident reader can rest assured that any impressions of confusion he receives from the novel are not necessarily due to cursory reading habits. For one thing, Sender himself referring to La orilla speaks of "un confusionismo deliberado"¹. For another, Pepe Garcés himself admits to a certain confusion with regard to what happened to him between leaving Madrid and the events of the following notebook, La vida:

El resto de mis recuerdos hasta llegar a Casalmunia es confuso y los contaré al azar de mi memoria. Es decir como pueda. (p.299 Vol.III)

¹See Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.153.

It is a simple fact that Pepe gives two different locations for the place of Palmar's death (cp. p.289 and p.300 Vol.III), that he contradicts himself as to whether he was going to O's house to meet O or his brother and as to whether he had or had not been invited by O, before (cp. p.299 and p.300 Vol.III), and that he never finally makes clear and explicit his reasons for driving from Madrid in the direction of Barcelona (cp. p.300 - two explanations - and p.299). It is also simply true that references to time and its passing in the course of La orilla - e.g. "semana" p.265, "¿dos semanas?" p.352, the extraordinary protracted "antes de mediodía" p.303, that Pepe was seeking O's house, and the numerous metaphorical uses of the word "día" pp. 288-9, p.343, p.345, p.348 and p.350 - totally defy objective ordering. It is understandable, reasonable and clearly intended that the reader should feel confusion in respect of such matters Pepe himself does. (It should be understood moreover that all attempts to resolve the geographical confusions of La orilla and La vida are idle. Casalmunia and the town where O. lived have no precise identifiable location. I would suggest that the voice of Sender is audible behind Pepe's own confusion over the death place of Palmar and the identity of O's town:

No recuerdo la ciudad donde sucedió lo que voy a contar
 Por su emplazamiento podría ser Zaragoza, pero no por
 los hechos. ¿Sería la capital de la Rioja? Tampoco
 lo creo. Ahora ya digo, no puedo recordar; de tal
 modo los hechos se me hicieron confusos. (p.300 Vol.III)

Zaragoza and Logroño are so different - Zaragoza is five times the size of Logroño, a major industrial capital and a city unlike Logroño, with which Pepe was intimately acquainted - and they are so far apart - more than a hundred miles - that Pepe's consideration, confusion and half-hearted rejection of the two as the major scene of crucial events, have the effect of convincing the reader that the implicit question is totally

and absolutely unanswerable, and of making him abandon his enquiries in the certain knowledge that he is not intended to pursue them. In short Sender is telling the reader that the identity of O's city is irrelevant. The implicit message conveyed by the impossibility of elucidating the time scale is the same. There is no precise, identifiable time scale and attempts to find one are idle.)

The first observation, then to be made in respect of the impression of confusion that an initial reading of La orilla gives, is that it corresponds to the author's intention, made explicit through Pepe's own comments. The reason for Pepe's confusion are easy to understand: he found himself in situations of great uncertainty and danger - both Pepe and the character, Ramón Sender, were to lament the instability of the battle lines (p.310 Vol.III) -, incongruous and unreal things were happening all around him, and consequently it is unsurprising that both at the time and later, in the very process of writing (following further traumatic experiences) Pepe's memory should have jumbled events and places. The peculiarities of Pepe's psychology, add to our understanding of the process. The manuscript collector alludes to the tendency for things to become unreal for Pepe when his conscious mind found difficulty in assimilating them (p.264 Vol.III) and later Pepe gives two examples of this happening (pp.537-9 and p.498 and ff. Vol.III). Let us now see if, having limited the area of confusion in the book by reference to Pepe's own psychology and having recognised that certain aspects of the confusion are probably not subject to elucidation - viz. geographical location and time sequence - we are able to penetrate the confusion that remains.

The period of maximum confusion for Pepe and the reader extends from the time Pepe left Madrid, following the party at Manuel Becerra until he reaches Casalmunia and starts to work there as an identification expert. Casalmunia itself proves impossible to identify geographically and happenings of a decidedly odd nature take place there, but by and large in Casalmunia and subsequently the narrative is devoid of "irrealismo", Pepe moves in a recognisably real and objective world, which is peopled by real persons and in which events take place in an immediately intelligible time sequence. His manner of reaching Casalmunia and taking on his particular job there was decidedly strange: his search for O's house had led him to some "cobertizos" where he had been given an unsolicited recommendation for a job in Casalmunia by a Cardinal. (What the job should be had first occurred to him whilst overhearing the interrogation in Burgos.) The ease with which he reached Casalmunia from the "cobertizos" was such that he regarded it as a miracle, (p.362 Vol.III) and he might well have made the same observation about the readiness with which they accepted him for the particular job he sought. But if mystery surrounds the period leading up to Pepe's establishing himself in Casalmunia and his manner of doing so, there is doubt or uncertainty in Pepe's mind that he had reached a destination, if only temporary of some importance:

En fin, aquél era el único lugar donde podía, de momento salvarme - eso me parecía entonces - y allí me quedé silencioso, disimulado y activo. (p.363 Vol.III)

Casalmunia was to provide Pepe with the first of, possibly, three opportunities during the Civil War of actively doing something he could square with his moral conscience. There he applied himself to the task of interfering with or preventing the process of identification of prisoners:

Me obligaban a ir y venir con mis máquinas tomando declaraciones y luego daba las cintas magnetofónicas al juez. Ciertamente cuando la declaración perjudicaba a los reos (y yo lo sabía porque estaba en interioridades de los autos) la suprimía alegando defectos técnicos y volvía a grabar otra, hasta lograr la que podía favorecerles.

(p.377 Vol.III)

The moral attractiveness of this task did not lie so much in the fact that he could, on occasions, prevent people being killed, but that he could prevent personal killing.

(Personal killing was an act in which someone was killed for reasons associated with personality or superficial identity.)

Though he never finally convinced himself of the validity of it, Pepe felt there was a distinction to be made between

personal¹ killing and impersonal killing.

¹ A distinction between the "persona" or superficial personality, according to which each man is individual and differentiated from his fellows, and the essential nature of a man, which he shares with his fellows and may be described as his "impersonal" features, is first to be found in Sender's pre-Civil War work. In Teatro de masas (Valencia, 1932) Sender suggests that true reality is only to be found in what men can do, have and dream in common, and that a revolutionary theatre ought to be directed at that true reality:

Allí donde las multitudes coinciden está lo inmutable y lo eterno. Allí donde los sueños de los hombres juntos coinciden está lo inmutable y lo eterno. Allí donde los sueños de los hombres juntos coinciden está la realidad real. Las multitudes sólo son capaces de coincidir en eso, en los sueños, y el teatro revolucionario español, el teatro nuestro, tiene que afrontar y lograr esa realidad del ensueño común. (pp.115-6)

Noche develops the distinction both in the satire of the heads and their pathetic personalities and their difference from the men who erected the dolmen and decided not to indicate anyone's name on it. (As we have seen many of the essential points of Noche are conveyed in The Affable Hangman.) After the Civil War, partly perhaps because Sender was an exile, partly perhaps because he had less sympathy with collective endeavours, though the distinction is maintained, the focus is different. Sender is interested in the distinction in respect of individual men. One of the major things that engages Federico Salla's attention in La esfera is his essential, ganglionic and immortal self beneath his superficial personality:

-Un hombre sin persona, sin máscara, todo ganglios ¿será un hombre sin muerte, un hombre inmortal?-

El hombre y la hombría - pensaba, - son cosa de los ganglios. El cerebro es un tumor, una enfermedad y de él nace la idea de uno sobre sí mismo: la persona. Pero esa idea diferencial de uno (la persona, la máscara) es lo que nos individualiza y separa mientras que los ganglios nos funden con la sustancia común, con la humanidad en ese nivel quizá inmortal de lo primario inefable. Lo que muere es la persona. Un cadáver es la cristalización de la diferencia - la persona -. Pero... la verdad es que yo no tengo casi persona. Soy todo ganglios y por eso mi muerte será una muerte mínima cuando llegue. (pp.90-91)

In moral terms too, Sender has been consistent in applying the distinction and in ascribing a higher value to what is impersonal over what is personal:

...el bien y el sentido del bien van ligados a todo aquello que en el sentimiento, la conducta o la idea de un hombre es impersonal. Es cierto que la verdad y la belleza son impersonales también... El buen hombre que cumple con su deber pasa desapercibido y es la virtud del grupo la que prevalece. El criminal se individualiza inmediatamente. La personalización y el pecado parecen ir juntos. Nada más impersonal que la vida, la obra y la predicación de Jesús. (Ensayos sobre el infrngimiento cristiano, p.146).

Perhaps wars for an essentially libertarian country such as Spain were inevitable if one accepts the views of the character Ramón Sender (see p.310 ff. Vol.III), as Pepe appears to, and there is no necessary moral censure to be made of the different groups of Spaniards which, either in harmony or conflict, have fought, killed and died in attempts to use liberty in the service of some abstract ideal. Certainly Pepe could be lavish in his praise for idealists on both sides who fought and killed for what they believed in (p.390 Vol.III). Furthermore, Pepe repudiated his pistol largely because it would have converted the war into a private personal affair (p.245, Vol.III), felt extremely disturbed by civilian deaths (p.500 Vol.III) i.e. of individuals who were not regular combatants, whereas casualties among regular soldiers left him relatively unmoved (p.511 Vol.III) and fought the machinations of López with particular doggedness because he and the agents of his "servicios especiales" were concerned with the elimination of identified, civilian individuals (p.558 Vol.III). For Pepe's doubts on the question of the distinction between personal and impersonal killing see his conversation with La Cosa (p.558 Vol.III) and note that though Pepe sees impersonal killing as superior to personal killing he still refers to the former as "crímenes impersonales" (p.511 Vol.III). In Casalmunia, perhaps for the first time in his adult life, then, Pepe was doing something he could believe in, and it is for this reason primarily, rather than the fact that for the first time in the Civil War he found himself in a situation of relative safety that he gave him such a sense of satisfaction. Up to that time Pepe had been lost, vulnerable and confused.

Pepe's confusion, particularly intense during the period extending from the party at Manuel Becerra, at the outbreak of the Civil War, till his arrival at Casalmunia, can be seen, to a lesser degree, as a characteristic of the whole of his adult life from childhood onwards. The restless initial attempts to find a temporal or geographical setting for an idyll with Valentina and later, after Valentina had become pure idea, his aimless movement and his life-long dissatisfaction with his existential predicament. His early life, i.e. up to Panticosa, had direction in that he was seeking to realise his ideals, but each frustration plunged him into despair and confusion, and later he simply did not know what to do with himself or whether to hope or despair. The different problems that had arisen out of each and every one of his major actions - association with Checa, his relationship with Isabel and his involvement in the olive-pickers' strike - had caused him to limit his ethical activism to the avoidance of evil. To this general confusion and aimlessness in the pre-Civil War Pepe, there came to be added the problems of Occisal 1. Even before the war, then, we find Pepe in flight, so to speak, from his own name and the identity associated with the gun:

Fue entonces cuando yo me di cuenta de los peligros que me envolvían personalmente y decidí cambiar de nombre cuando frecuentaba algunos lugares, a ver qué sucedía. El cambio tenía que ser hecho con el mayor cuidado, como se le trasplanta, por ejemplo, a un ciego la retina de un muerto en accidente, para que vea. En mi caso era más bien para no ser visto. (pp.258-9, Vol.III).

The flight was from danger and possible involvement in something he regarded as wholly immoral. Initially, the flight had no recognisable destination. With the advent of the Civil War however, and in particular when Pepe - at the party - realised its implications, the dangers and problems associated with the

gun became particularly acute. As on all occasions of trouble or danger, he consulted Valentina, i.e. his idea of her, and she became in a manner of speaking the object of his flight (p.337 Vol.III). In the ideal world of Valentina the problems associated with his gun would not exist and, indeed, it could be expected that the blots on his copybook associated with having designed the gun, would be made to disappear as those associated with Isabel had been when he had met Valentina in Panticosa. The Civil War, then, intensified Pepe's problems associated with his gun which in fact antedated the conflict. These problems had two aspects, moral and physical - he was in personal danger. The major difficulties of La orilla and the apparent confusion of the text relate specifically to the period of his confusion and difficulties as he sought to find a solution to his problems. The difficulties and confusion ended, temporarily, when he found a temporary solution to them in Casalmunia. There, he not only found himself in a situation of relative physical safety, but, much more importantly, he was engaged in a job which morally - and one might also say poetically - was ideally suited to him. Interfering with the process of identification of prisoners he could help, in a small way, to depersonalise the war which his gun, if he had developed it or if someone else had wrenched the secret from him and exploited it, would have become a private, personal affair amongst identified individuals, probably for the most part, civilians. Casalmunia was in fact, in the real world, a substitute for his joining Valentina in an ideal world, or a world of ideas.

Expressed in different terms, Pepe's confusion after designing the gun, which was intensified with the advent of the Civil War, was what happened when he tried to change himself

from a "máquina de la risa" into a "príncipe de la seriedad". The war with its absurdity and danger, which he saw clearly at the party and immediately afterwards, forced upon him a change that he had only begun to contemplate previously. The result was, as has been said, that in Casalmunia for the very first time in his adult life, Pepe was able to express his moral beliefs through actions. The very difficulties and doubts he experienced testify to the authenticity of his moral endeavour and that the reality against which he was pitting himself was of the objective world.

The mystery surrounding Pepe's leaving Madrid and his destination reflects Pepe's own confusion of planes of reality and, so to speak, levels of intention. The problems associated with Occisal 1 antedated the Civil War, and it is for that reason that in two explanations Pepe gives for his leaving Madrid he suggests that his intention dated from several years before the war:

Había salido de casa en busca de O., pero en realidad, para evitar la horrible congruencia de aquellos años durante los cuales acabé la carrera. (p.338 Vol.III)

Había salido de Madrid - creo yo - huyendo de los que querían comprarme la maquina del crimen, y aunque yo no pensaba venderla se había desarrollado una fiebre extraña en esa dirección, que me avergonzaba. (p.338 Vol.III)

(The problems associated with the gun can usefully be considered as representative of the kind of problems that Pepe faced as an adult. The first of the above two quotations is not specific in its reference and might be taken as alluding to problems other than those of the gun.)

The more specific explanation Pepe gives for having left Madrid:

El dueño del coche que conducía yo estaba en Barcelona esperándolo. Podía esperar sentado. (p.299)

in no way contradicts the general explanations just cited. The war intensified Pepe's general problems and the possibility of returning a car to a friend gave him both the means and if necessary an official justification for leaving a scene of immediate danger. For Pepe, the desire to escape from a future of inevitable horror, perceived at the party, and the earlier, now intensified, desire to escape from the problems and dangers of the pistol were one. (Of course, the notion of the possibility of a geographical escape was an illusion - the war was all around him and with it ubiquitous danger, and Pepe would again be under pressure in respect of Occisal 1 in Barcelona - in the same way it had been an illusion to think that engineering rather than any other university specialism would be morally neutral. In each case Pepe sought to convert something which was of the very nature of reality and over which he had no control into something which he could control and change. The same unconscious, psychological compensatory mechanism was evident in the way Pepe strove to overcome feelings of unworthiness in the face of Valentina (see above p.191 footnote 2.) Similar observations can be made in respect of the destination of Pepe's flight. He sought to escape from physical danger and potential involvement in immorality. An ideal world where Valentina dwelt would constitute an adequate haven, and for this reason, as has been indicated, on one occasion Pepe appears to be saying that his flight was directed to her (p.337 Vol.III). Failing Valentina, a reasonable though inferior alternative was O's house. For one thing, O. might speak to him of Valentina (p.301 Vol. III)

and for another, on a more practical level, within the Nationalist zone, friendship with a Nationalist such as O. might save Pepe from immediate or future dangers:

Me convenía aquella clase de relaciones si quería salvarme. (p.299 Vol.III)

At some stage, Pepe might have considered these destinations - Valentina, O. and Barcelona - as alternatives, as time passed, and particularly as they are presented in the novel, it becomes difficult to distinguish one from another. Thus at one point Pepe suggests he was looking for both O. and Valentina (p.337 Vol.III), and at another he suggests that O's house with its smell of marsh-mallow root would be as effective in protecting him, not just from the dangers of the Civil War and those associated with his gun but from the fates, as had Valentina when he was in Madrid (pp.131-3 and p.300 Vol.III). (Thanks to Valentina Pepe had been able to drink with impunity from the cup of Circe, in the form of a girl from the Vistillas district; whereas his unprotected friend, R.I.P. had succumbed to the fatal potion of the girl's charms. For an account of the kind of dangers Pepe foresaw when he did not have a sense of Valentina's presence, see p.96 Vol.III). All the destinations would meet Pepe's basic requirements, so he thought, viz. they would provide him with physical safety and free him from potential involvement in immorality. It is therefore not surprising that in moments of great urgency and danger he should think and suggest he was going to them all at the same time.

In the light of all this it is clearly idle to concern oneself with finding out if Pepe's flight from moral and physical danger can be chartered on any map. He was seeking to

orientate¹ himself mentally and morally, and from the point of view of his later account of his search for orientation, mental events, feelings, fears and imperfect images of reality loomed as large on the landscape his mind sought to penetrate as did physical features. Pepe's problems were particularly acute for the reality in question for him threatened his moral and physical survival.

Incredulity is thus not an appropriate response in the reader when, in La orilla, people and events do not appear those of objective reality. They certainly do reflect crucial aspects of Pepe's total experience during this period of his confusion and disorientation. Their reality is of a subjective kind corresponding to Pepe's own understanding, or his attempts to understand things. The decidedly strange appearance of the outlying districts of the unidentified town where O. lived.

¹Cagliostro's important general comment - Las criaturas - is helpful in understanding the process:

...el problema de cada cual, desde que nace, es el de la adaptación a la realidad por sus propios medios (hechos, imágenes, sueños.) Tarea laboriosa y enfadosa. Tarea ardua, de veras. Sospechaba que él no lo había conseguido aún y mucho menos Spic. (p.313)

A key point of difference between Crónica and Las criaturas, both of which are illuminated by Cagliostro's comment, derives from their structure. Within the third person narrative of Las criaturas a sharp distinction is possible and is maintained between what happened and how people reacted to it. Within the memoirs' structure of Crónica that distinction is only maintained so long as the narrator was able to view what happened with equanimity and understanding. When he was not, what is related is precisely that amalgam of "hechos, imágenes, sueños" to which Cagliostro referred and of which La orilla is a conspicuous example.

Encontré por las calles cosas raras. No taxis por el momento. Las calles iban cambiando de carácter y entre ellas aparecían espacios yermos y campestres atravesados a veces por la vía férrea de la Compañía de Ferrocarriles del Norte y a veces por una autopista bordeada de una pequeña valle de alambre. (pp.300-301 Vol.III)

Pero iba penetrando en barrios realmente extravagantes. Era aquello como una aldea polaca cerca de Rusia, en el distrito de Vilna¹, quizá, con campaniles bizantinos y almiarés. El suelo en declive, siempre en declive y de tierra; es-decir, sin pavimentar. (p.302-Vol.III). -

corresponds to the feelings of estrangement and alienation that many sensitive Spaniards, let alone Pepe with his particular problems, must have felt at the outbreak of the war that was tearing their country in two and had revealed an entirely new dimension of violence and horror in people and places they had felt they knew well. The reference to the apparent closeness of Russia is particularly significant. It was Pepe's view that the Russians and the Germans were the major enemies of the Spanish at this time and according to Gabriel Jackson² the nature of the Russian presence in Spain was such that they could conduct interrogations and establish and use air-fields without the Prime Minister or the Republican military authorities knowing anything about them. Similarly, I would interpret the account of the surprising appearance and crashes of the two "armatostes incalificables" as an attempt to convey a subjective impression of a frightening and bewildering aspect of the war rather than their being something real in terms of objective reality. They would appear to represent the vast expenditure and wastage of equipment, newly developed for war needs. They certainly convey the overwhelming sense -

¹Significantly, Vilna came to form part of the U.S.S.R. in 1939.

²Op.cit., p.403 and ff.

particularly true of war time - of technological monstrosities (which, in terms of men and materials, were of unwieldy and of uncontrollable destructive potential).

Appalling as the reality underlying the crashes of the "armatostes incalificables" is, it is obviously not something which at a given moment would evoke horror or demand an immediate response, as would have been the case if it were a question of real accidents. Physical and psychological survival in war time both dulls a man's sensitivity to horror and requires him to push general considerations to the back of his mind while he busies himself with his immediate problems. Hence the muted nature of Pepe's responses to the crashes, and hence the ease with which he could become distracted from his genuine concern for possible victims, postponing calling the emergency services until he had looked for O's address in the telephone book, and remaining contented that someone else would call them whilst he had his hair cut. Shortly afterwards he gives every appearance of having completely forgotten about the incident. Pepe's immediate and pressing problems were of moral and mental orientation. To have concerned himself at that point with aspects of the war, that did not relate specifically to him and his safety, would have been dangerous. He would only be able to do this when, in Casalmunia, he had temporarily solved his immediate problems. To solve those problems, Pepe needed to orientate himself:

Los más importante - pensaba - es tratar de identificar a la gente y saber quién es quién. (p.301 Vol.III)

He had to find O's house or at least his address.

The encounter with barbers who appeared to be Italians, the discussion and embarrassment over Pepe's hat, his agreement to have his hair cut and the substitution of an extremely

elaborate time-piece for Pepe's normal watch belong to the same type of strange but intelligible reality. Italian forces in Spain during the Civil War were estimated¹ at being about 30,000 at their maximum. Now the service personnel who would accompany such a force could easily account for Pepe's meeting apparent Italians in what was mainly a Nationalist zone, setting aside the international reputation of Italians as hairdressers, which of itself would make sense of Pepe's subjective image. Clothes are always important for hairdressers, particularly those with an eye to their own self-interest, and within the wider context of the war, it should be recalled on the basis of what absurd details - Pepe reading a novel by Pitigrilli, Ramón II's casual trousers - deductions and conclusions of potentially mortal significance could be made. Pepe himself alludes to the ubiquitous terror (p.302, Vol.III) and perhaps his own deference to the barber's insistence he should have his hair cut and the latter's extraordinary concern that his intentions in respect of Pepe's hat should not be misunderstood, were reflections of an awareness of the terror. The substitution of the more elaborate time-piece for Pepe's watch may be regarded as a manifestation of wish-fulfilment. Pepe was above all concerned with orientating himself. A very much more elaborate time-piece such as the one that was given him might indicate what planets and astronomical influences could affect the course of events, and might help him in a way a conventional watch never could. So he imagined he was given one. It should be recalled that there had been various interpretations at the party at Manuel Becerra of the effects the Civil War would have upon time. The new time piece might help Pepe see his way

¹See Thomas: Op.cit., p.793.

amidst the confusion.

At no other point in Crónica would it have been more appropriate for Pepe Garcés to have experienced the crucial moral and psychological stocktaking of his meeting with Ramón Sender. Lost, in danger and urgently seeking moral and mental orientation since the party of Manuel Becerra and on his own initiative, Pepe had been so concerned with his preparedness for the demands of the war situation that one might be tempted to interpret the Ramón Sender he meets as in many ways a subjective, mental projection similar in kind though not in function to the Valentina of Panticosa, prepared for him by his subconscious to enable him to discuss fully his own doubts and misgivings. Certainly, there was something of this in certain of the various Ramones he had met formerly, who whatever objective reality they had, in discussion with Pepe sometimes express views and criticisms of him similar or identical to those Pepe himself had made or would make (see above p.233 and p.236). Certain details of the meeting however cannot be accommodated within such an interpretation, so one must limit oneself to saying that the so to speak objective dialogue with Sender is very similar in kind to the form of internal self-questioning with which Pepe was involved, and even though Ramón Sender is not a subjective projection of Pepe's, the matters Pepe discusses with him are of a personal nature one would not normally expect to be discussed by total strangers. In short, the conversation with Ramón Sender, has the same reality and takes place in the same world as all that happens in La orilla between the party and Pepe's arrival in Casalmunja viz. apparently unreal, somewhere in between the objective world and that of Pepe's mind, and partaking of both.

As has been stated (see above p. 239). and as the parallels between him and the other Ramones should have made clear, the Ramón Sender Pepe meets is not the author of Crónica, or to put the matter more precisely he should not be considered to be the author at the time of the book's being written (cp. Unamuno and his meeting with Augusto Pérez in Niebla). He may be considered to be Ramón Sender in the early days of the Civil War. I say may be considered because the statement may lead the unwary reader astray in so far as it may suggest that this younger version of the author might have been given some of the author's authority and omniscience qua author. This is certainly not the case. Readers who hope that in Pepe's meeting with Sender, the relative hermetism of the first-person structure of Crónica was going to be penetrated and that a clear and definitive assessment of Pepe was going to be made by a younger version of the author, are likely to be disappointed. In point of fact the relative hermetism and ambivalence of the work are enhanced by the presentation of Ramón Sender as a character with, as will be seen, all the defects and limitations of a run-of-the-mill person, of neither more nor less importance than Pepe Garcés. By this technique the author voluntarily abrogates his own authority. (To this it might be objected that I am quibbling with matters of little moment. The author is the author is the author. Crónica is Sender's creation and everything that happens in it was decided by him. In no sense can an author abrogate his own authority and his apparent intent to do so is an attempt to do the impossible. This is of course perfectly true and I have no wish to refute it. But though Sender undoubtedly controls everything in his artefact, he is quite able to refuse to present solutions in his work. This

as we have noted in an important characteristic of works such as Emen hetan, Las criaturas, The Affable Hangman and La esfera in which the reader is compelled to wrestle with the characters' problems and alternative, offered solutions without guidance from the author. In this sense Sender does indeed challenge and abrogate any claim to omniscience or authority which the reader might have felt tempted to impute to him. And this is precisely what happens in Crónica and the major function of the scene of the meeting of Pepe Garcés and Ramón Sender is to re-affirm the ambivalence of the work.)

But if the Ramón Sender Pepe meets is not the author nor does he have any of the author's authority, he is undoubtedly linked in some way to the author, not least by name, and through that link, and through the parallels between Pepe and the Ramón Sender he meets, a clear connection is established between Pepe Garcés and the author. Even the reader who missed the clues strewn throughout the meetings of Pepe and the earlier

Ramones will - in the first exchanges between Pepe and Sender, when the latter introduces himself as José Garcés - start to realise that that connection does exist and is so important that Crónica can be considered to be a kind of autobiography. This point I have tried to substantiate throughout this chapter both through footnotes illustrating parallels between the lives of Pepe and the historical Sender and through a number of general comments. (See above pp.226-7, p.216 and footnote)

As has been said, the first days of the Civil War were a crucial testing time for Pepe as he sought to orientate himself morally and mentally and change himself from a "máquina de la risa" into a "príncipe de la seriedad" in response to the demands made upon him by the new national situation. For

Sender too, the Civil War constituted an existentially crucial period. It was the time of a tremendously important change in the nature and intention of his writing, as he indicated to Peñuelas¹. Idealism in politics, for example, which had occupied a progressively smaller place in Sender's works up to 1936 - he had researched and portrayed the failure of the Cantonalist revolution of 1873 in Mister Witt - in the period immediately after 1939 is either not to be found or is presented in a much more muted and qualified form. Furthermore, and more importantly the structure of the post-war works is infinitely more complex and the observations on reality very much more questioning and tentative than those written previously. (Mister Witt, the last novel Sender wrote before the war may be regarded as an exception. Milagritos does forgive and forget the treachery of Mr Witt, whose silliness and weakness, despite its mortal consequences, are presented with compassion and understanding.) An indication of the actual process of change in Sender during the Civil War, is evident in Contraataque, the work, first published in London, which Sender evidently wrote for propaganda purposes. The reader is right to feel sceptical about the confidence with which, in that work, Sender makes certain assertions², but I see no reason, in the light of the criticism the book evoked from both anarchists and communists³ and the very, clear evidence for Sender's courage and independence which emerges from the whole of his life and work, to regard the following passage: as anything but the sincere expression of his deeply held views:

¹See above p.20.

²See above p.19.

³Ibid.

Había un trozo de periódico entre mis pies. Y leía un epígrafe que decía: "El tiempo trabaja por nosotros." Aquello me pareció de un optimismo infantil. El tiempo no trabaja por nadie. El tiempo trabaja para sí y nos devora a todos. Pero de la única manera que aquello podría ser cierto sería pensando en un porvenir de siglos. Claro está que los siglos trabajarían por nosotros y que nuestro esfuerzo, aunque en el peor de los casos quedara, aparentemente, interrumpido por las armas de dos grandes potencias y por nuestros enemigos inmediatos, no sería destruido. Socavaría todos los diques para abrirse un camino subterráneo, que iría a aflorar un día en otra época para extenderse definitivamente por la superficie. Eso era seguro. (p.210)

And this sincere expression of Sender's views during the early period of the Civil War with its barely disguised, immediate fear, shows him at that point to be about half-way between the more general optimism of the period up to 1935/6 and the total agnosticism and pessimism of the period immediately after 1939 which could allow him subsequently to argue¹, albeit with irony and provocative intention, that there was more truth in regarding the world and particularly Spain as being under the sempiternal influence of the Devil, than under the influence of God or any forces of beneficial nature. In short, then, the early days of the Civil War constituted a problematical, crucial period of transition in the lives of both Pepe Garcés and Ramón Sender and it is singularly appropriate that they should then meet, take stock and consider their similarities and differences, since each constituted an ideological and existential variation on the other. It is also singularly appropriate that with their own future and that of their country in doubt that they should meet at a "cruce de caminos"² (p.303, Vol.III) and that in the near vicinity there should be a city in the midst of a process of destruction or construction, - at the time it was

¹In Emen hetan.

²According to Spic - Emen hetan p.31 - a cross roads was a particularly propitious place for holding a sabbath and invoking the Devil.

impossible to determine which:

A media legua de allí había como una ciudad a medio construir. O a medio derruir. No es fácil determinar cuando la obra del hombre es constructiva o destructiva y hay que esperar al fin para darse cuenta, y el fin no llega a veces. (pp.303-304, Vol.III)

As well as a general similarity of situation, Pepe and Ramon Sender - like Pepe and each of the other Ramones - had very many things in common. They both began by hiding their identity one from the other and, after clarifying their true identities, displayed a parallel distrust for all matters associated with names and recognisable public identities. Both men were characterised by an identical, extreme form of sincerity and an identical desperate form of temerity (cp.p.316 and 407 Vol.III) They were both extremely critical of conventional religion yet, in their own ways, retained some kind of belief in and respect for God, Pepe's passionate commitment to the cause of freedom expressed on a previous occasion (pp.124-125 Vol.III) was echoed when Sender, also a convinced Republican, declared his reasons for opposing the Nationalists (p.313 Vol.III). Sender's pessimism in respect of the immediate outcome of the war (p.321 Vol.III) was later to be expressed in similar terms by Pepe (p.502 Vol.III). Furthermore, they were both sensitive to their similarities: Sender spoke of Pepe as a mirror image:

Soy un espejo donde usted se ve de un modo un poco desairado. (p.323, Vol.III)

and Pepe spoke of Sender as a brother:

Perdiendo la compañía de aquel tipo...yo tenía la impresión... de haber perdido a uno de esos hermanos potenciales que todos tenemos al otro lado del muro y cuya compañía fraterna no vamos a gozar nunca, porque el destino nos la niega cuidadosamente. (p.331 Vol.III)

Nevertheless, both men showed themselves to be extremely irascible one with another and their meeting ends with each man

feeling for the other both respect and interest, deriving from their similarity, and also bitter hatred. Thus Pepe was unsure whether, if he caught up with the disappearing figure of Sender, he would kick him or bid him farewell in a more amicable manner than he had done, and Sender, when the two men met in Argeles, after evidently feeling a need to justify himself to Pepe for taking measures to leave the camp (p.330 Vol.III) bade him farewell with bitter, hateful words:

Tú tienes tu Aldonza. Quédate aquí y muere con ella.
(p.330 Vol.III)

I would suggest that the mutual antagonism between Pepe Garcés and Ramón Sender - like the antagonism Pepe came to feel for the other Ramones (see above p.239) - despite their evident considerable similarities, derived from the fact that each constituted for the other a rejected existential alternative. Each was for the other what the other might have been, had he taken decisions other than those he did. The decisions I am referring to were those of considerable moment which involved considerable soul-searching and were possibly followed by regrets as most crucial existential decisions in which a man defines himself, his values and his future usually are. In an ideal world a man would never be required to renounce, in his view, a lesser good for a greater, but would be able to enjoy both. But neither the real world in which it was Sender's lot to live, nor the simulacrum of it in which Pepe had his fictional life, were ideal. Hence Sender as a character at the time of the Civil War rejects Pepe Garcés brutally, and much later as author had to write Crónica in an attempt to come to terms with what Umanumo would have called his ex-future self¹. Pepe for whom

¹See above p.103.

reconciliation through fiction was not open, had - to preserve his own identity - to destroy the credibility and value of his rejected, existential alternative. He did so by accepting uncritically the fantastic story, circulating in the concentration camp, that Sender had bought his freedom thanks to the ruse of the pretence gold bars.

The main way in which Pepe Garcés and Ramón Sender constituted existential alternatives lay with regard to Valentina. It was not simply that Pepe had Valentina as an ever-present ideal and that Sender had no equivalent, but that Sender, though recognising its power, rejected the whole idea of superhuman ideals, whether in human form or any other:

Los dos somos hombres puros y la diferencia suya está en su Aldonza. No me diga que no. Su Aldonza o su na dolza como decían en la baja Edad Media por Doña Dulce. De ahí doña Dulcinea. Todas son dulces. Usted tiene su pequeño absoluto accesible. En eso está la diferencia. Por eso usted se resigna, como la mayor parte, a ser un pobre hombre. Tiene su victoria secreta. Yo no tengo mi Doña Dulce, o la tengo y no creo en ella...es más probable que caiga usted. Su fe lo acabará, porque esa fe es como una fiebre que nos consume. Una fe admirable, desde luego, pero mortífera. Esa fe le acabará. Es casi seguro que yo le sobreviviré a usted, y no lo considero ninguna ventaja, porque mi vida, como usted ve, es un ejercicio constante y desesperado para convencerme a mí mismo de que no soy un pobre hombre. (Sabiendo que lo soy y que no tiene remedio.)

(pp.323-324 Vol.III)

As Sender suggests, in what are, for the most part, reasonable and accurate observations, the consequence of this fundamental difference was what Pepe had become uninterested in the here and now - Valentina was a kind of opiate that could distract Pepe's attention away from what he otherwise might have protested against or sought to change, e.g. in Morocco or in prison - Sender, on the other hand, without such a distraction, doggedly pitted himself problems, and - presumably injustices¹ in the

¹See above p.226 and footnotes.

here and now, even though he was more than sceptical about the practical effectiveness of his efforts. The nature of Sender's more down-to-earth commitment and his renunciation of the kind of ideal which Pepe embraced, ensured, in his own view, that he was freed from the typical human counterpoint of unrealistic hope and crushing disappointment and, that he achieved something similar to the calm and philosophic distance from the world of a Buddhist in an advanced state of meditation. Thus Pepe could say of him:

...Mira la vida desde fuera de la vida. (p.324 vol.III)

Sender, for his part, insisted that his life was not even vegetable:

...No. Mineral. Como el calcio y el sodio. (p.324 vol.III)

It would appear that these fundamental differences between Pepe and Sender underlay the differences in their ability to survive crucial experiences of misfortune. At the time of the meeting Sender had already seen what he describes as "el vacío absoluto". In Pepe's terms - confirmed by Sender - "La falta de la sentido de todas las cosas" (p.309 vol.III) But that vision had not destroyed him. Though life subsequently caused him much pain,

Yo puedo asegurarle a usted...que a mí la noción del vacío absoluto me desintegra, me descompone, me mata con una muerte horrible. Una muerte de cada día que nunca se cumple. (p.319 vol.III)

it continued to afford him pleasures (pp.328-329) and partly thanks to his reading of literature and philosophy (p.329 vol. III.), partly thanks to what he describes as his limited talents as a writer (p.318 vol.III) and partly thanks to his sense of the companionship of God¹ (p.318 vol.III) he was still able to

¹See above, p.50 and footnote.

continue living. Pepe, on the other hand, was destroyed by the sight of the "vacío absoluto", which only appears to have manifested itself to him when he learnt of the fall of Madrid and Valencia. His own observations on the subject (first quotation) can be supplemented by those of the collector of his manuscripts (second quotation):

...era bastante horrendo aquello del vacío absoluto. Todos lo teníamos delante este vacío; pero unos lo veían y otros no. Debo confesar que yo no lo he visto hasta hace unos meses, cuando me sacaron de España y me trajeron a este campo de Argelés.

Al vernos aquí (en Argelés), Sender y yo nos reconocimos en seguida a pesar de las barbas. El estaba muy flaco, pero la visión del vacío absoluto no lo había herido de muerte como a mí. (p.329 vol.III).

Entre el cielo y la tierra conservaba (Pepe) únicamente un libro. ... Era un manual de fortificaciones. Mientras la región cntral - Madrid y Valencia - resistió, es decir durante las cuatro primeras semanas de nuestra vida en el campo de concentración, siguió leyendo el libro, haciendo croquis, completando sus conocimientos. "Ah - solía decir - en el centro resisten y a nosotros nos llevarán allí cualquier día." ...El día que supimos que Madrid y Valencia habían capitulado, se fue al mar y arrojó el libro al agua. Volvió a su agujero y trató de dormir. Y le cedí como otras veces mi manta. Cuando despertó parecía otro. No era fácil creer que se pudiera tener un aspecto más lamentable, pero Pepe Garcés se había derrumbado. El fluido que sostenía sus nervios se fue con el libro de fortificaciones y con la esperanza de volver a la lucha. Era un hombre muerto... Cuando sabía que alguien había salido del campo y le preguntaban a él si le gustaría, se encogía de hombros: - ¿Para qué? (p.12 vol I)

Why the collapse of the r sistence to the Nationalist rebellion should have destroyed Pepe was because he still up to that point retained a belief in the kind of ideal represented by Valentina and that belief had come to be associated with what in the Republican cause he saw as the cause of ideal freedom (pp.124-5 vol III and pp. 312-313). After the fall of Madrid and Valencia Pepe embarked on the writing of his memoirs, initially as an escape, later with the specific object of being of use to others in the problems they might face in their lives (p.327 vol III).

In this activity he expended his last remaining energy and interest in living, and when the memoirs were complete he died.

But the survival capacity of Ramón Sender should in no way be interpreted as signifying the vindication of him and his philosophy of life over Pepe and his. It is important to recall that in the manuscript collector's view Pepe's arguments for staying in the concentration camp were much more substantial than his own for leaving (p.15 vol I), and it is important to note that the Sender Pepe met was insistent that Pepe's characteristic faith in an ideal was "admirable" (p.324 vol III). Both comments were spoken without irony or condescension. Furthermore, though Sender's assessment of the differences between him and Pepe generally was accurate and perceptive, it was a little sweeping and exaggerated. For example, both in Casalmunja and in Madrid, Pepe was able to show himself quite capable of applying himself with practical efficiency to morally important activities in the here and now. Valentina and all she represented did not on those occasions have the inevitable psychologically crippling effect that Sender imputed to them. The same defect of exaggeration vitiates Sender's later remarks on his ability to adjust to existential problems. Compare:

... mis poetas y mis filósofos, mis artistas y mis contempladores del vacío me han resuelto mi problema, me han enseñado a gozar de la vida y de la muerte.
(p.329 vol.III)

with:

Yo puedo asegurarle a usted...que a mí la noción del vacío absoluto me desintegra, me descompone, me mata con una muerte horrible. Una muerte de cada día que nunca se cumple (p.319 Vol.III).

and:

(Ver el vacío absoluto, es ver) ... la nada como una

perfección única de la cual, sin embargo, no podemos gozar. (p.309 vol III) (My parenthesis)

It is true that the conversation between the two men became rather heated in its later stages, due partly to Pepe's own efforts to provoke Sender (p.327 vol III), but such an argument in defence of Sender has no validity for he was a man who claimed to view all human life "desde fuera" and to have a calm otherwise only to be found among chemical elements. No, in the meeting Sender is shown to be as human and as endowed with defects as Pepe Garcés. His philosophy of life ensured his survival¹ after the Civil War whereas Pepe's did not, but if Sender himself thought there was no reason why his mode of thinking and being should entitle him to praise:

No tiene mérito, porque no conocibo otra manera de vivir. (p.323 vol III)

I see no reason why the reader should hold any other opinion.

Whereas Pepe would die an uncompromising idealist known to possess a number of limitations some of which Sender accurately perceived, Sender disappears from the pages of the book known to have a capacity for survival and a profound and comprehensive understanding of many aspects of life marred by a tendency to

sweeping generalisation particularly evident when he was roused.

Personally, I oscillate in my own mind between thinking that something of the imitation gold bars sticks to Sender and should be seen as grounds for dismissing what he represents - in the same way that Menos Ramón's² association with the inspiration of Occisal 1 morally invalidates him and his philosophy - and

¹In fact Sender considered staying in Spain till the end of the Civil War, see Despedida en Bourg-Madame, a short story included in Relatos fronterizos (Mexico 1970) p.134.

²There are further grounds for seeing a moral link between Menos Ramón and Ramón Sender the character. Menos Ramón's fascination with all that was negative and evil and his concern to utilise them in action and literature is similar to Sender's concern with evil - according to Pepe: "Sabía demasiado sobre el mal implícito en las cosas, para poder ligar con los intereses ordinarios de la expresión." (pp.330-331 vol III).

regarding Pepe's uncritical acceptance of the story as an expression of his animosity to Sender. In any case, Sender's appearance in La orilla is extremely interesting and helpful from the point of view of the placing of Pepe Garcés both with regard to what he was and what he was not.

The strange cobertizos, not precisely identifiable as belonging to a factory, a station or an airport, to which Pepe went immediately following his meeting with Sender were the same as those under which he had found himself briefly before the meeting. Initially they had engaged his attention. "No era la casa de O., pero era más interesante..." (p.302 vol.III) - but he had not stayed there. Afterwards, he did stay there and for some time, gaining in the course of it a specific orientation of the kind he had been seeking. In the light of the fact that his second encounter with the cobertizos proved to be crucially important, whereas the first did not, I would tentatively suggest that the meeting with Sender was necessary for Pepe to draw profit from the cobertizos experience, and that it was essential for Pepe to have had the psychological and moral analysis involved in his meeting with Sender for him to be able to understand something of the war and what he should do in it. The evidence is far from explicit, but there is at least one indication that Pepe's first encounter with the cobertizos was a false start, for after leaving Sender Pepe does not say he returned to the cobertizos but,

Pero volvamos a mi narración:

Como digo, llegué a los cobertizos. (p.332 vol.III)

It is almost as if Pepe were suggesting that his encounter with Sender had not taken place and that he was, after a short digression, reaffirming his place in the narrative, which was neither more nor less than the first arrival under the cobertizos.

Under the cobertizos Pepe completes the process of his immediate orientation and comes to a partial understanding of the Civil War. Since the war began as a Nationalist rebellion, the major new things which Pepe had to try to identify and understand in the new war situation were features of the Nationalist cause. Hence it is these that are most in evidence under the cobertizos. The Nationalist cause claimed and had historical precedents. These too were represented under the cobertizos. On a simpler level one could note too that though Pepe's precise location is unidentified - and unidentifiable - he was in a Nationalist zone.

The reality of the cobertizos like that of so much of La orilla particularly after the Manuel Becerra party, is much more subjective and symbolic than objective. I would suggest that two things in particular are suggested by the setting and the term, cobertizos. First, that under the cobertizos Pepe was partially sheltered from immediate physical danger within the war, in the same way that the rough kind of protection afforded by a cobertizo gives partial shelter from the elements to people or machinery. The several figurative senses in which Pepe uses the word "día", often suggestive at one and the same time of both the elements and the Civil War, indicate that this might well be the explanation of the cobertizos. Certainly the following quotation illustrates this, and also constitutes one of a number of statements Pepe gives alluding to his relative safety there:

Habría salido de allí con viento bolinero, pero no sabía cómo ni por dónde. Además había algo que me retenía (no sé todavía qué; yo creo que cierta sensación de seguridad física y el temor a la intemperie que aquel día sufrían todos)
(p.348, Vol.III)

In other words the cobertizos constituted a kind of temporary shelter which would suffice until Pepe reached the haven constituted by Valentina's ideal world. (O's house, could he have reached it, would in Pepe's view, also have been a place of relative safety.) But the cobertizos were also a different kind of shelter¹. They also suggest the kind of psychological distance which, particularly initially, was a characteristic of Pepe's confrontation of the reality under the cobertizos of the Civil War. We know that horrors tended to become unreal for Pepe, and that certain psychological defence mechanisms would come into operation when something happened that his conscious mind could not readily assimilate and Pepe, consciously or unconsciously, sought to convince himself that objective reality was entirely dependent on his capacity to believe it (p.538 vol.III). Well, something of the kind seems to be happening under the cobertizos. At least initially, whilst Pepe is there horrifying aspects of the various Nationalist supporters he meets are presented in a muted and sometimes even comic form. The war was, to a degree, divested of its horror. If one compares the range of feelings shown by Pepe under the cobertizos in his reactions to all he sees and hears, with the range of feelings he showed at the party at Manuel Becerra, the point becomes clear. The change in objective circumstances is

¹Perhaps too the cobertizos and the scene under it afford the author some protection. In answer to Peñuelas' comments - in Conversaciones - on the difficulties of interpretation experienced by a certain critic in respect of La orilla, Sender made reference to the problem of censorship in Spain:

Bueno, hay que tener en cuenta que en un régimen con censura literaria los críticos están en condiciones incómodas no sólo para escribir sino para leer y enterarse. No tienen la sensibilidad atemperada. Y a veces no se enteran. (p.153)

In other words, a minor object of the "irrealism" of manner of this section of the novel may have been to render it, apparently inoffensive, to people of the mentality of the Spanish censorship authorities.

not sufficient to explain the difference. On the contrary, the dangers and misfortunes which, at the birthday party, had been predictions, had become realities by the time Pepe was under the cobertizos. Pepe had far more grounds for strong feelings - of fear and horror - two weeks after the birthday party than ever he did before. Yet the fear, horror and disgust Pepe feels under the cobertizos are of an extremely muted kind. For much of his time there, indeed, he is amused and entertained. However, the unconscious psychological defence mechanism that distanced Pepe from overwhelming experiences of horror, making him feel that they were unreal, would be prejudicial rather than helpful if it permanently eliminated such experiences from his mind: he would be rendered incapable of recognising or avoiding such experiences subsequently. What happens then is that things become unreal for him only temporarily and later true reality filters slowly through to his consciousness. This is what happens under the cobertizos: as time passes, Pepe sees more clearly what the people there represent and his horror and disgust grow. Indeed from the very first, a strange kind of struggle takes place in Pepe's mind between conflicting tendencies: the one, trying to protect him from the horror of things, the other concerned lest he lose all contact with reality. (The struggle can be seen quite clearly both when he was told the village secretary had been shot and when he was told the owners of the house, where López had his headquarters, had been killed: initially things became unreal for him and immediately afterwards he tried to re-establish contact with reality by respectively touching the table cutlery and by firing his gun against a plant pot.) I would suggest that the fact that in two of the cobertizos the people are actors and involved in

rehearsing a fiction is an implicit indication of the defence mechanism which Pepe sets up because of his refusal to accept reality as it is, and similarly the sharp contrast that Pepe established between himself and his morality with that of the actors, is an indication of his attempt to re-establish contact with reality. The following quotation shows how Pepe established the contrast:

Yo quería marcharme, pero no sabía cómo. Suele sucederme cuando las cosas toman un cariz político, aunque sea bajo formas ficticias y satíricas. Entretanto, seguía mirando alrededor. Aquella gente precia tener mucha vida secreta y en sus ojos se advertía un dramatismo cauteloso. Pero yo pensaba: "Ninguno de vosotros trató de suicidarse como yo en la vía del tren de Alcannit ni recibió las aguas eucias de los retretes". Esa reflexión me hacía sentirme vagamente superior. (p.336 vol.III)

Pepe's attempted suicide in Alcañiz after being disabused with regard to Isabel and Palmar, was an attempt to expiate and destroy the false self that had betrayed Valentina, forgotten Checa, sinned with the perfidious Isabel and was on the point of deceiving the kindly don Bruno and don Alberto. It was an authentic moral act, the like of which no actor could perform.

If then the significance of Pepe being under the cobertizos lies primarily in the fact that the scenes which take place there show his derealisation of the horror of the first days of the war, it clearly follows that despite appearances to the contrary, events and people there have much more symbolic and subjective reality than objective. There are abundant examples to illustrate this point, of which the following are merely representative. Thus Pepe's unspoken but formulated questions as to what was happening under the first cobertizo and in general under the first two are immediately followed by someone approaching him to provide answers (respectively p.333 and p.337 Vol.III).

Pepe's recollections on the glow-worms that he had once placed as a kind of diadem in Valentina's hair, are immediately followed by the Cardinal under the cobertizos referring to glow-worms in a metaphor:

Durante la noche se oyen disparos y se encienden y apagan las luciérnagas del crimen en las puntas de los fusiles.
(p.341 vol.III)

The matter is doubly strange in view of the unusualness of the metaphor. Pepe's thoughts about his earlier experience in Burgos, where he had first had the idea of becoming an identification expert, are followed by a church dignitary suggesting that the identification of men who had been shot was a national problem (p.345 Vol.III). In other words, the church dignitary voices the very thought that Pepe had reached through an entirely unspoken and private association of ideas. Pepe's feeling sick as the result of a depressing conclusion on the nature of man, is followed by someone being sick in the same room (p.346 Vol.III). La Cosa makes reference, in his first major speech (pp.346 Vol.III) to the childhood idyll of Pepe and Valentina without there being any evidence that he had met them or even heard of them before. In short then, the world in which Pepe moves under the cobertizos has very little objective reality, and is quite evidently an extension of Pepe's own subjective world containing his thoughts feelings and formulations. Essentially he is the centre of all that happens or seems to happen there, in a much more profound sense than in any other section of the memoirs. In many ways that world is dream-like. Thus not only is there, as we have seen, a very close correspondence between his thoughts and events which appear to be external to him, but also the inter-relationship of things and people apparently external to him is dream-like. For example, a reference to the Civil War through a dance metaphor causes

a real dance to take place (p.339 vol.III). Someone's using the expression - "Hay que sentar cabeza" (p.339 Vol.III) - is followed by the appearance of a severed head balanced on a rocking chair and the Cardinal appears to be reassured in respect of his concern for tradition by putting on twelfth/thirteenth century spectacles. (p.343 Vol.III)

Dream-like and subjective though the reality under the cobertizos is, it reflects accurately many key aspects of the nature of the Nationalist cause and its supporters. Like the mothers of the marriageable girls at the party - all of whom immediately placed themselves in the Nationalist camp - a number of the Nationalist supporters under the cobertizos show themselves to be obsessively concerned with their financial interests (p.340 and pp.343-3 Vol.III) which presumably they felt had been threatened by the measures of successive Republican governments¹. There are in fact a number of links between the girls who danced the matarile at the party and those who dance the pavane under the cobertizos and Pepe sees them as the same girls (p.352). A significant change in them was that their dance under the cobertizos was more "cursi". (For Pepe's interpretations of "cursilería" see above p. 250). The traditional values of the girls at the party, loosely conveyed by their familiar references to the King, is much more evident under the cobertizos when in one room they are described as "jóvenes pálidas de la alta Edad Media" (p.333 vol.III) and in another they and the people with them bore "adornos arcaicos como minúsculos roeles, losanjes y flordelises" (p.338 vol.III). The traditionalist

¹For example the laws of September 1932, March 1935 and November 1935 aimed at agrarian reform, see Jackson, op.cit., (pp.84-5, pp.169-70).

values of other Nationalist supporters under the cobertizos are expressed, not only through various explicit comments, but also through many of their names. It seems clear that don Rodrigo is not the Gothic King who reigned at the time of the first Moorish invasion of Spain, that don Beltrán is not the person to whom rumour ascribed the paternity of ls Beltraneja, nor Sibelina de Madrigal de las Altas Torres, Isabel of Castile. They, and others with equally suggestive names, would appear to be twentieth century nobles, or would-be nobles, belonging to families concerned to stress their traditional Spanishness.

Specific references to aspects of the Nationalist cause are also made. Under the first cobertizo an anti-clerical film, or a satire on anti-clericalism, was being made. The role and power of the Church in Spain had been subjects of fierce controversy since early in the nineteenth century. During the period of the Second Spanish Republic measures introduced to limit the financial and educational power of the Church had tended to polarise opinion in a dangerous manner¹ and was to constitute one of the fundamental causes of the Civil War. It was the Nationalist hope and the Republican Government's fear that the Church would give its official blessing to the rebellion, and there is clearly an allusion to this in the odd, irregular hand-movements that the Cardinal makes from time to time:

El cardenal... escuchaba sintiendo con la cabeza y con la mano izquierda, que movía discretamente al final del brazo de las bendiciones. (p.344 Vol.III)

El cardenal movía la mano (con el brazo caído e inmóvil) en un movimiento circular, pero ahora al revés, de izquierda a derecha. (p.344)

After a short period the Church did give the rebellion its

¹See Brenan, op.cit., pp.233-239.

blessing and from then onwards the rebels spoke of their cause as a crusade, a twentieth century example of the defence of traditional, Spanish Catholic values similar in kind to the struggles of previous centuries against the Moors, the Turk, Protestantism, French Rationalism and the ideas of the French Revolution. In the twentieth century, the adversary was materialism and international communism. The support the Nationalists received from Germans (many of whom were Protestant), Italians and Moroccans (all of whom were Moslems) clearly vitiated the rebels' claim that they were engaged in an essentially Catholic and Spanish enterprise. From the Republican point of view, though, the Nationalists' foreign support, despite its ludicrous features, was a matter of deep concern. It is to the former aspect that allusion is made under the cobertizos when a Moslem prince speaks of his problems of mustering more support:

Yo podría traer más tropas para la cruzada, pero mi primo Yusuf se opone, y lo peor es que no me queda el recurso de eliminarlo porque como mi pueblo es tan supersticioso y cree que los príncipes tenemos origen divino, si lo mato se producirá en las masas una cierta decepción; usted comprende. (p.344 Vol.III)

Both the ludicrousness of the word "crusade"¹ on the lips of a Moslem prince and his extraordinary cynicism in respect of his own principle of divine right, wrest all credibility from the claim to illegitimacy that he or the Nationalists he supported could ever make.

A key problem on the Nationalist side, before, during and after the Civil War was to unite the different anti-Republican groups and to play down the obvious incompatibility of their

¹The Moors did however invoke the name of God in speaking of their aid to Franco, see F. Díaz-Plaja La guerra de España en sus documentos (Barcelona 1973) p.16.

different aspirations. The achievement of some kind of unity was essential for the triumph of the Nationalist cause, and therefore viewed with fear and concern by the Republican supporters. The unification of the Falange and the Carlists who, at one stage had been planning an anti-Republican rising of their own¹ was not brought about until 19th April 1937 and only then with dissatisfaction to both groups². In one of the cobertizos allusion is made to this question in the words of don Beltrán, apparently a Carlist, who suggests the Carlists would not participate in what was not a dynastic dispute:

Nosotros no entramos en la danza. Estamos al margen,
ya que no se trata de un pleito dinástico.
(p.339 vol.III)

The seriousness of the matter is eliminated by the confusion that his words cause and when the girls seize the opportunity to dance the pavane. Similarly his speech (pp.343-344 Vol.III) which makes a call to unity on the Nationalist side ends with so bathetic and ambiguous a conclusion, that even the most fearful Republican would have heard it with amusement rather than concern.

The fearful aspects of the Nationalist cause and its supporters might be disguised when Pepe came to see them under the cobertizos but the disguise was not impenetrable and his will to orientate himself there was as determined and desperate as ever. It was while Pepe was moving from one to another of the cobertizos that the most important indications as to his general need to orientate himself morally and mentally³, to which I have referred repeatedly, are given. Initially, as has been

¹See Thomas, op.cit., p.148, footnote 1.

²Ibid., p.533 and footnotes.

³See Crónica p.336, p.337, p.338 and p.345, Vol.III.

said, Pepe did not penetrate the disguise concealing the true nature of the Nationalist cause and the war situation. He only became aware of them on occasions when an odd thought, or someone's unexpected observation would suggest something serious and sinister. Thus, doña Sibelina's comment:

-La historia es un carnuz.

Esa palabra - carnuz - estalló en el aire como una piñita y de ella salían otras desflecándose como serpentina: fetidez, corruptela, pútrido, carroño, ranciedad y gusarapiento. (p.340 Vol.III)

Similarly, Pepe's reflections on the crosses adorning the walls led him all of a sudden to think of the national situation.

En los muros se veían cruces solares (todas las cruces son solares, en lábaro (la de Constantino) ... y también la cruz que llaman potenzada (en forma de doble horca patibularia). Esa era la cruz nacional, por el momento, en los dos lados de la península. (p.342 Vol.III)

Little by little, though Pepe was not to lose his relative lightness of mood altogether, the true nature of the Nationalists and the war situation were to filter through to his consciousness and he began to react to his own thoughts and events around him more strongly. Significantly, it was thoughts on the identification issue which led him to reflect on the essential nature of the people present and the need to express in a definition of man his warring attributes. These reflections made him feel disgusted and sick. It was the first time that he had had feelings of such intensity under the cobertizos. The long hard look at the people around him signified the beginning of his re-establishment of contact with reality. Almost immediately afterwards he realised that he had begun to find what he was seeking:

Yo creía haber comenzado a orientarme. Era necesario porque solo sobreviven los que se orientan. (p.348 Vol.III)

He had still to be given the Cardinal's recommendation but of

course Pepe's orientation was primarily an internal matter - a matter of his discovering within himself a morally suitable role within life and within the situation of danger. The Cardinal's recommendation and indeed the miraculous way he arrived in Casalmunia were little more than an endorsement of a change within Pepe that had already occurred. The presence of particular people around him or his finding himself in any particular geographical situation were irrelevant, as perhaps the fact that it is impossible to find Casalmunia on any map indicates. Only when Pepe was well on the way to resolving the problem of his own orientation was he in a position to meet and try to identify La Cosa.

Pepe's attempts to identify La Cosa constitute the second part of his attempt to orientate himself within life and within the Civil War. He never finally succeeded but he did regard the task as important and it is significant that on the second occasion that Pepe met La Cosa he felt that the insights he gained into its nature were extremely important, though at the time he did not know what to do with them (p.565 Vol.III).

A comment that Sender makes to Pepe about what he will find under the cobertizos:

La cosa. No mala ni buena, sino indefinible. Vaya y verá. Es mejor que lo descubra usted. Como la mayor parte de las cosas del mundo, esa cosa es incalificable.
(p.325 Vol.III)

does not constitute an auspicious presentation of the major problem under the cobertizos that Pepe, and the reader, face. But it does at least prepare us for its difficulty suggesting that in the end the problem may be insoluble. I would like to begin by noting isolated features of La Cosa and different comments made about it.

One of Pepe's first observations on La Cosa is that it had things in common with Frankenstein's monster:

El héroe de la novela de la esposa de Shelley ... tenía la misma frente zurcida por cirujanos inseguros.
(p.350 Vol.III)

Now a key feature of Frankenstein's monster was that it was man-made and destructive.

La Cosa was neither masculine nor feminine, but bisexual (p.350 Vol.III). Moreover it reflected not only the groups specifically involved in the war, but the whole of Spanish society, of which La Cosa revealed the worst aspects:

Me di cuenta en aquel momento de que La Cosa ni sugería la aristocracia ni el pueblo, ni la oligarquía ni la clase media; pero tenía una fealdad hecha de retazos hispánicos de lo peor de cada estamento.
(p.345 Vol.III)

And the name - Juan Pérez - which could relate to any social group or class was thus appropriate. Certain of the other names people had given it - el Estupefacto, el Ptolomeo and El de la Val de Onsera - reflect more of the namers' confusion than what or who La Cosa was.

Both a poem La Cosa recites (p.352 vol.III) and a comment Pepe makes, suggest that this man-made monster of general Spanish provenance will be closely associated with the future. Here is Pepe's comment:

Era la parturienta del futuro. La parturienta epicena del porvenir. De ella o de ello nacería un mañana sórdido o brillante. Era difícil prever las condiciones del mañana. (p.351 Vol.III)

Some of the difficulty of identifying La Cosa is thus explained since the future with which La Cosa was associated was, and is largely unknown and unknowable.

La Cosa was extremely badly constructed, something which

was reflected not only in its painful difficulty of movement, but also in what it said about itself:

"El problema esencial era el mismo: unidad. Es lo que falta. Lo que me falta a mí." (p.360 Vol.III)

Nevertheless, Pepe found himself unable to laugh at it. Its typical Spanishness and its capacity for anthropomorphic suffering made it worthy of compassion rather than laughter (p.358 Vol.III), for on account of its own existential anguish or that of people associated with it - the text does not make the point clear - it deserved to be taken seriously:

Ya digo que no me reí. Cosa y todo - es decir, sin dejar de ser La Cosa -, se veía en ella la posibilidad de la angustia y la máquina de la risa pasaba a ser la máquina de una risa redimible por la desesperanza de los que han de morir. Pasaba a ser el príncipe de la seriedad. La Cosa. (p.357, Vol.III)

But whereas Pepe took La Cosa seriously and sought to control his natural feelings of repugnance in its presence, the Nationalists laughed behind its back and sought to ingratiate themselves with it to its face (p.358 and p.359 Vol.III). This hypocrisy seems of almost exactly the same kind as that shown by don Mendo in his attitude to the Spanish pueblo (p.339 Vol.III). But La Cosa was not deceived: it was very sharp in speaking to don Rodrigo and Vallehermoso (p.358) and Pepe felt sure that La Cosa was an enemy of the girls (p.352).

It is perhaps less odd that La Cosa should reveal an essential acquaintance with Pepe and his relationship with Valentina (p.355), without its ever having met them before - after all the Señora de las Voces did too, and La Cosa, like she, can be considered in large part as a subjective projection of Pepe's - than that it should know what had happened to Alfonso Madrigal (p.361) and be imputed with all power and all

knowledge (p.353 and p.361). The explanation, I would suggest, is the similarity which may exist between La Cosa and Jesus Christ, as Sender saw them.¹

The confusing picture of La Cosa which has so far emerged from my account of it is in no way simplified by what La Cosa says of itself. The first major speech of La Cosa. — which despite its presentation in the notebook follows a strict poetic form of stanzas, of four verses of respectively fourteen, fourteen, fourteen, seven syllables, with an almost perfect rhyme scheme ABA² — gives a number of indications of what or who it is. Initially, it appears that a clear distinction is to be made between La Cosa and its "tiempos" on the one hand and on the other, the "sombra de la ira" which is projected over them. This non-belligerent characterisation of La Cosa is confirmed in the body of the speech which in its central portion appears to be something between a prayer and a complaint to Jesus Christ for allowing "la orgía ... de la orden del crimen" (p.355). Indeed, at one point La Cosa's argument goes further and it includes itself among the body of Christians whose faith sustains them throughout the trials to which they are subject:

... pero un ingenuo amor más fuerte que las veleidades
de la fortuna nos sostiene el fervor; ... (p.355)
(my italics)

It also seems to imply that Jesus Christ would be capable of both stopping "esta inútil orgía de la ira del hombre" and of giving consolation to those who suffer it. Shortly afterwards however, it clearly states La Cosa's own responsibility for much that was happening in the Civil War: "... en gran parte lo que sucede es obra mía y no lo niego." (p.358) And that

¹See above p.189, footnote 2.

²This breaks only in the stanza referring to Pepe and Valentina.

statement immediately precedes a prediction that many participants in the Civil War will be consumed with guilt as soon as they pause to reflect what they have done (p.358), which implies La Cosa has a moral conscience.

But do these single features amount to any one something which the reader can say is La Cosa? For Pepe, it is true, La Cosa's final meaning remains obscure, and the revelation that he receives on his second meeting with it is very different from anything he had had before.

I would suggest that La Cosa stands on the very frontier between Pepe's own subjective world and the objective world. Like so many of the things under the cobertizos La Cosa at one and the same time reflects the external world and also Pepe's attempt to understand the external world. It is neither wholly subjective nor wholly objective but both. La Cosa represents the failing attempts of radical elements in Spanish society from the centre to the left of the political spectrum to transform that society in the early stages of the Civil War and Pepe's attempts to understand them at that particular juncture. The lack of co-ordination of those radical elements is clearly indicated in the most significant of the names by which it was known - CNT... Those attempts were human and hence the monstrosity that was the result of those unco-ordinated attempts to participate in what was a collective enterprise is shown to be man-made. Those attempts were clearly failing during the last period of the Second Spanish Republic, and for that reason the monster seemed to be made up of the worst elements

of Spanish society. La Cosa revealed the sempiternal Spanish problem of which Sender had spoken - the infinite capacity of Spaniards to fight one another for a whole range of incompatible ideals. La Cosa is not the Civil War but the failing attempts of the radical parties of the period immediately before and during the Civil War. The hypocritical ingratiating features of the Nationalists under the cobertizos to La Cosa are closely associated with the Civil War - Franco's rebellion was in part a response to the lack of co-ordination of the centre and the left - so too is it closely associated with the future: the outcome of the war would in part be dependent on the military ability or lack of it of all the democratic groups. La Cosa appears to have an independent existence because the unco-ordinated collective democratic enterprise that it represented, once created and set in motion had its own momentum. There was no going back. The actions and efforts of the immediate past could not be denied and would continue to have repercussions affecting the present and the future.

Pepe does not fully understand La Cosa nor fully identify what it is. If he did, i.e. - if he had fully penetrated the reality and nature of all the groups that combined to fight the Nationalists, it may well be that Crónica would never have been written, for he would surely have despaired in the way he does on learning of the fall of Madrid and Valencia. The precise identification of La Cosa, which Sender had already seen before meeting Pepe, would have brought with it a vision of the "vacío absoluto", which for an idealist such as Pepe, would surely have proved mortal. (After his second meeting with La Cosa, Pepe came nearer to discovering what was destructive in it.)

Limited as Pepe's understanding of La Cosa was, it was sufficient for his immediate needs. His encounter with it and with the Nationalists under the cobertizos had enabled him to orientate himself morally and mentally within a war situation that had so exacerbated the problems of his adult life, many of which antedated it. The war had, so to speak, aroused him from the moral passivism and relative sonambulism of his adult life when the real world had been of indifference to him, so long as it did not interfere with his ability to dream and remember Valentina. For Pepe individually, as for the nation as a whole, the war was, to paraphrase Menos Ramón a timely reminder to subjectivists of the existence of objective reality. La orilla describes how Pepe began to respond to that reminder and how he painfully turned his attention to the real world, sought to understand it and find a morally viable place for himself within it.

La vida comienza ahora¹

La vida is the last of Pepe Garcés' notebooks and describes his direct confrontation with the reality of the Civil War. The process of this relative adjustment and mental and moral orientation was complete when Pepe arrived in Casalmunia for the first time. With a much keener and more perceptive awareness of reality than ever before, Pepe is seen exploring and tackling the practical and moral problems of life in times of war. Forced by the war situation, he seeks and finds for the first time a morally acceptable role for himself within the real world and within reality. His achievement was to build a bridge between the world of his private, subjective ideals and objective reality. The bridge was to last until he heard of the fall of Madrid and Valencia.

With the exception of three incidents, nothing that happens in La vida is described in the "irrealistic" manner of large portions of La orilla. The point is that Pepe had passed the major period of confusion and horror of the first days of the war. To a large extent he now understood what was happening around him. He had succeeded in construing and conceptualising

¹The title is based on Pepe Garcés' thoughts on the significance of the birth of a child in Casalmunia (pp.582 Vol.III). The title is not without a certain irony, for if the notebook shows Pepe becoming aware - in the midst of the war - of the miracle of life and birth, and if Casalmunia represents the real possibility of continuing, normal life in spite of the war and is therefore a foretaste of its ultimate aftermath, the book also presents Pepe's suicide and the, at least temporary, triumph of the forces of destruction and oppression. Perhaps therefore, the title also alludes to Pepe's death seeing it as the one way his alienated spirit could be at one with the ideal that was Valentina and free from the limitations that reality had always imposed upon it. (See above p.201, footnote 1, second quotation from Los noventayochos.)

events, people and causes, with the result that within the narrative they now appear less amorphous, symbolic and subjective than formerly. It is only when he hears of events of particular horror - e.g. the killing of the village secretary and the owner of the house where López had his headquarters - or when he turned his attention to considering questions as to the fundamental nature of the period of conflict - La Cosa - that things became unreal for Pepe, and "irrealism" apparent in the narrative. The only other examples of "irrealism" in La vida are of a very different kind: they reflect largely incomprehensible but miraculous events such as occurred in Casalmunia.

As has been said, the internal change that had taken place in Pepe by the time he reached Casalmunia was much more important than the change in his objective circumstances. He was in a safer place than before and he had the opportunity of practising a morally acceptable job, but neither of these things would have been impossible if he had not first sought to face the moral, practical and epistemological problems presented by the war. The fact that Pepe was able to make his most penetrating and perceptive observations on the war immediately following his arrival in Casalmunia (i.e. before there was time for his new situation to affect him much) confirms this interpretation. Pepe's observations embrace reflections on individual psychology the socio-psychology of war, the immediate history of Spain and the general, European context within which the Spanish Civil War took place. The major Spanish factors underlying the Civil War he saw as follows:

El odio se había creado (por varias razones) como una consecuencia de la discrepancia política violenta: el cambio de bandera nacional, la desvaloración de las formas de vida de nuestros padres (sobre todo la tradición católica) y el auge económico de las clases humildes durante la república. (p.374 Vol.III)

La verdad era...que no había habido vagar en aquellos tiempos de la república inesperada para que se levantaran corrientes y movimientos de masas. Eso lleva tiempo.
(p.375 Vol.III)

Political rhetoric which denied the humanity of the enemy both indicated, and contributed to, the deterioration of the situation of conflict:

En cuanto al miedo, lo crearon los ideófonos; es decir, los altavoces de las radios, y sobre todo de los mítines políticos, presentando una y otra vez al dragón enemigo; o sea, a la fiera corrupta que quería violarnos y destruirnos. Cada cual hablaba del dragón enemigo y de su peligrosidad. (p.375 Vol.III)

The violence and potential violence of the conflicts in Spanish society during the period of the Second Republic were increased by patterns of political behaviour in the rest of Europe - undoubtedly Pepe was thinking of Stalin's purges and campaigns of enforced collectivisation and industrialisation, and such things as Nazi involvement in the Reichstag fire -:

Así como las teorías de Freud suprimieron un día el pecado sexual las prácticas de Hitler y Stalin hicieron frívolo y habitual el crimen político...Hitler y Stalin decían: "Mata a vuestros disidentes"...Y no sólo autorizaban con el ejemplo el crimen político - sino lo que es peor - lo pusieron de moda. (pp.374-375 Vol.III)

Factors of personal psychology determined who would or would not follow the Russian and German examples:

Ya se sabe que los cursis, en España y en otros países, siguen las modas. Así es que, en el lado republicano y en el nacional, se mataba por cursilería política.
(p.375 Vol.III)

The collapse and the questioning of traditional Spanish values undoubtedly predisposed people to follow foreign examples, though national precedents of violence were not lacking, but of course those most susceptible were the people¹ who, for psychological reasons, lacked the confidence or convictions sufficient to enable them to resist social pressures or to make moral stands.

¹In another context Sender has suggested that people of this kind were likely to suffer various kinds of mental disease, see above p. 205, footnote 1.

One of the most interesting aspects of Pepe's observations on the Civil War and its background was how he saw himself in relation to it. He was free from what, in the loose literary sense of the word, could be termed the schizophrenia with which as a boy and a young man, he had approached the external world. He did not follow the Russian and German fashions because he was not "cursei", but that was due not to any merit on his part but to peculiar factors in his own background and psychology over which he had no control, as he was later to admit:

Mi actitud genuina, ahora en mi madurez, es parecida a la que adoptaba sin querer cuando tenía nueve años. No hay duda de que a esa temprana edad estamos ya formados o deformados para siempre... Soy el mismo, tímido y serenamente exasperado, con mi idiotez y mi locura y mi sinceridad desesperada. (p.408 Vol.III)

He too was capable of killing in war, as an expression of existential anguish and frustration:

La obra del hombre es la locura mortífera... Yo recuerdo ahora que mi obra en aquel momento de la guerra era el asesinato impersonal, que es también en cierto modo - repito - una transferencia del deseo o la necesidad de matarse impersonalmente (cosa ardua). Por eso es tan tentadora para algunos la guerra.

El asesinato más impersonal es el suicidio, ya que no se mata uno por hallarse en conflicto con la persona, es decir, por ser feo o hermoso, rico o pobre, culpable o virtuoso, sino simplemente por algo que es común a todo el mundo, por la angustia de un ser (de una necesidad de ser) imposible. Es decir, un ser imposible de diferenciarse bastante satisfactoriamente en la tierra. Y necesitado absolutamente de esa diferenciación (p.523 Vol.III)

Even the slavish devotees of the Russian and German fashions i.e. the extremist politicians of the Second Republic, had given every indication of that same anguish and frustration liable to destroy either them or others (p.230 Vol.III) Pepe was very critical of leading figures on the two sides, on account of their equivocal attitudes towards violence.

...la calabaza genial y la pera canónica¹ no aprobaban el

¹Respectively, Manuel Azaña and Cardinal Isidro Gomá y Tomás.

crimen y tampoco lo condenaban. Querían ganar por los dos lados... (p.376 Vol.III)

But he recognised that there was something equivocal in his own attitude too:

...también yo quería ganar (en mi edad erótico-conflictiva) por dos lados. (p.376 Vol.III)

(He both believed in the Republican cause in war and longed for an ideal world in which military conflicts of whatever kind would be anathema.) As has been stated - see above pp. 260-262 Pepe never found ease of conscience with regard to the question of killing. His was the classical dilemma of the liberal pacifist in a war situation where justice, democracy and freedom were being threatened by a belligerent enemy. Could the participation in evil (the war) be justified in terms of its possible limitation of a further evil (an imposed undemocratic, repressive regime following it.) Now Pepe saw in the Republican defence of freedom and democracy an echo of the ideals associated with Valentina, he had the same kind of problem of squaring his actions with his ideal notions of morality as formerly, of bringing together Valentina and the real world. Every step was fraught with difficulties and every action seemed to imply some kind of compromise. It was not that this was the case, but that Pepe believed it to be so. In point of fact, it is difficult - according to conventional criteria of morality - to fault Pepe in respect of what he did in La vida. But Pepe's moral notions derived from ideals abstracted from the real world and practical problems.

Perhaps it could be said that the one indication of the inadequacy of Pepe's understanding of reality and the war situation and of his adjustment to them, was the moral qualms that tortured him whilst in Casalmunia. The practicality and

moral value of his actions and the intelligence and perceptiveness of his observations on the war speak only of the adequacy of his adjustment. The reader who recalls Pepe's hopelessness in respect of Valentina's parents and Isabel's abortion, and the poverty of his response to his imprisonment and his military service, is profoundly impressed by his actions in Casalmunia and the transformation they represent. At times, it is true, Pepe did achieve a relative calm, recognising that the moral problems presented by the situation in which he found himself in Casalmunia might well have overwhelmed most saints. (p.365 Vol.III) and that there was little to be done but resign himself to the overwhelming demands of sleep even though he, and the kitchen superintendent - also a Republican - aspired to unwavering wakefulness and moral vigilance:

Tal vez, igual que yo, ella despertaba en la cama, se volvía de lado y se dormía otra vez gruñendo entre dientes. La conciencia de uno arguía protestando contra aquellas ejecuciones y el cuerpo gruñía por el simple hecho de haber sido arrancado del gustoso sueño. Ese cuerpo nuestro cuyas letras, reajustadas con una metátesis sabia, decía puerco. El puerco cuerpo quería dormir, a pesar de todo. (p.382 Vol.III)

But on far more occasions than not, that calm is lacking and Pepe insists on the moral inadequacy of his life in Casalmunia. He felt himself to be guilty (p.378 Vol.III) by virtue of his association with the Nationalist para-military organisation. He was ashamed of thinking about Valentina whilst in Casalmunia (p.382 Vol.III) and I think one of the reasons he thought so much about his father and his early childhood during Bazán's trial was to reassure himself as to his true nature and true character, so at odds with how he appeared to Casalmunia:

Una vez más, me decía que mi personalidad superficial y aparente de hombre cauto y oficial de identificaciones y de antropometría (mintiendo a todos constantemente) estaba en desacuerdo con mi vida anterior. A veces, temía que aquel desacuerdo pudiera llevarme a la catástrofe. (p.408 Vol.III)

(It will be recalled now, similarly, when first under the cobertizos he reassured himself of the difference between himself and the actors around him by thinking of his attempted suicide in Alcañiz (p.336 Vol.III). Very much later (p.456 Vol.III) Pepe was still to feel pangs of conscience in respect of his life in Casalmunja, even though he knew such feelings were irrational and that others there - the counsel for the prosecution, the counsel for the defence and the kitchen superintendent - were playing false roles and that all the formalistic Nationalists seemed like good actors taking part in a bad play. (p.380, Vol.III)

The main prisoner whose identification Pepe was concerned to prevent was the man known as Luis Alberto Guinart. He was really Julio Bazán, the head of a Catalonian trade union, the PMLC¹. In association with Bazán, in a very short period of time, three singular pieces of selfless heroism took place with remarkable results. Firstly, the Lacambra brothers refused to reveal Bazán's true identity even though it would have saved their lives. Secondly, Bazán confessed his true identity to the morally fickle Villar, and later to the court that was trying him, as a token of his renewed faith in human nature. Thirdly, Bazán refused to allow the killing of a Nationalist corporal and guard even though at the time it seemed the surest way of facilitating his escape from certain death. These actions had remarkable effects on two men and some effects on a number more. Villar, for one, was quite transformed, and applied himself, with quite unprecedented vigour, to saving

¹I can find no evidence for there having existed a trade union with these initials, which presumably represent Partit Marxista Leninista de Catalunya.

Bazán - both publicly in court and later secretly. To Pepe the change in Villar was most apparent:

¡Qué raro, que el escéptico Villar gaste tanta retórica para salvar la vida de un ser humano! Todavía si hubiera tratado de salvar a algún ser de otra especie, por ejemplo a su perro...porque tenía un perro al que quería mucho y que se le parecía físicamente. Pero Villar comenzaba a ser un hombre nuevo. (p.398 Vol.III)

Another man deeply affected by the selfless actions of Bazán and the Lacambra brothers was the second lieutenant. Initially it was he who had proposed that the corporal and the guard should be killed to facilitate Bazán's escape which he agreed to help for the money. But Bazán's refusal seriously disconcerted him and he was subsequently unable to obey his express orders to shoot the prisoners:

"No vayan a creer que no los quise matar porque había cambiado de opinión por reblandecimiento humanitario. No soy de esos. Es que, como dije antes, anduve dudando un par de horas. Me acordaba de demasiadas cosas. Los hermanos Lucambra, usted, Bazán o quienquiera que sea, había dicho unas horas antes que prefería morir contra el muro antes que matar a esos dos hombres inocentes. Así decía usted. Pensando en eso se me hizo de día." (P.577, vol.III)

The judge at Bazán's trial was also affected, though less so. When during the trial the prosecution quite reasonably objected to Villar's reference to the Lacambra brother's heroism on the grounds that it implied the guilt of Bazán/Guinart, the judge dismissed the objection without giving any grounds for doing so and, intrigued, sought a clarification from Pepe with regard to his theory on Bazán's demonic possession (p.414 Vol.III). Later he was to make an entirely unexpected visit to Bazán's cell. Pepe recognised that this unusual behaviour stemmed from the judge's thoughts about the Lacambra brothers (p.425 Vol.III). Though we know very little about the corporal and the guard the second lieutenant wanted killed, it would appear that they too were impressed by, at least Bazán's, selflessness.

Even though the second lieutenant had had them imprisoned, they succeeded in winning sympathy among other members of the guard and initiating what became a kind of liberal mutiny, as the second lieutenant explained:

"Una parte de la guardia estaba levantisca. El cabo y el soldado cuya muerte yo les propuse, aunque los había relevado y estaban arrestados, habían hecho adeptos, no sé cómo. Yo tenía mayoría en la guardia y los asusté, pero hicieron correr la voz y la cosa andaba turbia."
(p.577 Vol.III)

Later when the corporal and the private had the opportunity of taking revenge on the second lieutenant, they refused to take it. Pepe himself makes no explicit comment on the selfless heroism of the Lacambra brothers and of Bazán, but it seems clear that he was affected too. It could reasonably be argued that these examples of self-sacrifice were necessary for Pepe to overcome his last vestiges of passivism, and for him to gain sufficient faith in human nature and its capacity to influence reality, to enable him to defend the cause of man through the village secretary - undoubtedly the most important moral act of his adult life. Certainly he applied himself to the defence of Bazán with quite a singular dedication. What he did was to defend the examples of heroism by enhancing what, from a conventional point of view was their incongruity. He told lies and modified the truth in the manner of a caricaturist at one and the same time simplifying, distorting and clarifying the truth. Thus he spread rumours that Bazán really was Guinart pretending to be Bazán with the object of diverting attention away from the activities of the real Bazán. The whole matter in Pepe's hands appeared more confusing and extraordinary than ever, as he explained to Villar:

-Todos andan desorientados. El juez piensa: "Los hermanos Lacambra mueren por Guinart, Guinart ahora afronta la muerte por Bazán, y sin embargo no hay mas que una vida."
Se pregunta el juez qué clase de gentes son ustedes.
(p.421 Vol.III)

Presumably Pepe's suggestion that Guinart might have been diabolically possessed, a suggestion he was quite happy to have Bazán later to describe as "trucos" (p.549 Vol.III), was made with the object of opening up perspectives of mystery and irrationalism to the Nationalists and thereby sensitizing them to what by any terms was extraordinary in Bazán and the Lacambra brothers. Further highly significant implicit indications of Pepe's being impressed can be seen in his narrative at this point.

These implicit indications centre on the strange figure of the dustman who claimed to be Bazán's father, possibly at Pepe's suggestion, and proved a very willing help in the several plans of escape. He is half-way between a real figure in the objective world and a subjective, symbolic figure in the world of Pepe's imagination representing all that was extraordinary in the actions of the heroes and in the conversion of the onlookers. The dustman alludes frequently to the natural law and the need to change it (p.426 Vol.III and p.427). Later Bazán made quite explicit the particular natural law, the dustman had been referring to:

"...los nacionales antes de retirarse mataron a algunos presos, pero dejaron a los demás para que los liquidara tal vez la tropa de la guardia. Pero los soldados nos abrieron las puertas a todos. Como decía el basurero, yo había cambiado la ley. Aquel viejo loco se refería a la del instinto de conservación." (p.548 Vol.III)

But how could a dustman interpret such phenomena so accurately, and how could he be so at home amidst such abstract philosophy? If we assemble together all that we know of him - his slant eyes and reddish goatee (pp.424-5 Vol.III) his irrepressible laughter (p.435 Vol.III), his concern with the disposal of rubbish on a universal scale in an "incinerador universal" (p.426 Vol.III) his recognition of his impotence and that of

his "patrón" (p.426 Vol.III) in the face of the laws of the universe, and his interest in the universality of both love and hate (p.426 Vol.III) - it becomes apparent that the dustman has many of the characteristics¹ of the Devil/Pan². That the Devil should manifest himself in war-time fits in well not only with Pepe's particular interpretations of war³, explained by the dustman,

"Ese joven taciturno que se ocupa de las identificaciones, un tal Urgel, me decía hace poco que yo debo ser el cornudo Pan de los viejos tiempos. El viejo Pan que sale del bosque y asusta a las gentes. Cree Urgel que la humanidad ha caído otra vez en el pánico antiguo porque he salido yo del bosque. Por eso ahora todos matan o mueren. Por pánico, más que por odio o convicciones."
(p.426 Vol.III)

But also with the kind of vocabulary employed by Catholics⁴ on

¹Compare these details with, for example, the descriptions of Pan/the Devil in Emen hetan, p.34.

²In art and literature the Greek God Pan, the Roman God Faunus and the Christian Devil have been identified one with another to a greater or lesser extent. Popular depictions of the Devil seem to have been drawn heavily on conceptions of Pan and the Satyrs. Ethically too, a loose identification of the lasciviousness of the Satyrs with Pan as the personification of nature, provided plenty of material on which, at least, in the popular mind, images of the Devil and his accompanying demons could be elaborated from the medieval period onwards. In his examination of moral questions in books such as Emen hetan and Las criaturas Sender explores and elaborates the conception of the Christian Devil.

³Pepe's particular interpretation of war corresponds very closely to Spic's in Emen hetan:

De tarde en tarde cuando la gente parece olvidar la verdad de las cosas Pan sale del bosque y recorre el país con una cabalgada de magistellus rojos incendiando y degollando. Por simples palabritas,. Nominalistas, unitarios, alumbrados, arrianos, concepcionistas, maniqueos, protestantes. Palabritas... No tardará en llegar en momento en que el hermano matará al hermano por una palabrita, tal vez por un color; rojo, azul.
(pp.87-88)

⁴The following passage taken from the Carta colectiva del Episcopado español a los obispos de todo el mundo explicando las razones del alzamiento y los fines de la guerra, first published in the Heraldo de Aragón, p.3 and p.9, 6 Aug.1937, may be taken as exemplary.

I quote from F.Díaz-Playa, op.cit., p.415:

Ha sido espantosa la profanación de las sagradas reliquias: han sido destrozados o quemados los cuerpos de san Narciso, san Pascual Bailón, la beata Beatriz de Silva, san Bernardo Calvó y otros. Las formas de profanación son inverosímiles, y casi no se conciben sin sugestión diabólica.

the Nationalists' side. However, it is in terms of Pepe's own psychology and attitudes that the explanations of his presentation and characterisation of the dustman lies. It would appear that one of the reasons Pepe chose to describe the dustman as he does was to convey something of his view of the nearly supernatural and inexplicable character of the actions of Bazán and the Lacambra brothers.

What Pepe is doing in the narrative is parallel to what he did in Bazán's defence, both in court and subsequently. Consciously or unconsciously, he is drawing a caricature distorting and exaggerating the truth in order to express it more clearly and forcibly. Instead of saying that the examples of heroism were so extraordinary that one might imagine they were due to some supernatural agent, he describes the intervention of a supernatural agent. That he should present this supernatural agent in the form of Pan/the Devil is explainable in terms of the profound dissatisfaction that Pepe felt in respect of all his actions in Casalmunia, to which I have already alluded. The war had forced upon Pepe a role and modes of behaviour that were fundamentally foreign to him, and he did not know where they might lead him. It is understandable that he should attribute that hateful war which had so balefully influenced him to the work of Pan/the Devil. In other words, the presentation of Pan/the Devil signifies an attempt at self-exculpation. However, the most interesting feature of the dustman was something of which Pepe at this stage was largely unaware. Devil, he may be, the dustman is far from being a wholly negative figure. In Casalmunia, he was an ally of Bazán and closely associated with the selfless and human virtues of Bazán and the Lacambra brothers. In more general terms if one sees him as being in some way the Civil War itself, he constituted the occasion and opportunity for the display of

virtues which enhanced the value of life (p.390 Vol.III) and brought about the moral transformation of men such as the second lieutenant and Villar. This is essentially the same point I have made earlier in respect of the transformation of Pepe, brought about by the advent of the war. It is implicit too in Pepe's recollections of his father and the effect of his beatings upon his character:

Lo que no sería ya nunca era un ciudadano. (p.407 Vol.III)
 (Later in the presence of La Cosa, Pepe would express the point explicitly and emphatically.) Essentially, the point is that good could come out of what is conventionally regarded as evil, and that the relationship between good and evil is infinitely more complex and difficult than Pepe had ever been prepared to admit¹. The point had been implicit in the examples of his grandfather, Bronco, Lucas el Zurdo and Menos Ramón, but until the advent of the war Pepe had not even begun to take it seriously. This was certainly the major lesson he still had to learn and would learn during the Spanish Civil War. By the time he did learn it however, his habits of thought and feeling were so immutably established that he was unprepared to continue living in a reality and a world so different from his preconceptions.

A number of carefully, planned conversations with Joaquín Torla, a Nationalist pilot, whose incidental interest within Crónica lies in his exemplification - like Ramón VIII - of the cynicism which could stem from frustrated idealism in love, ensured Pepe's escape to France at a point when the complications of his stratagems in Bazán's defence and a Republican attack on Casalmunia, threatened his safety. The success of Pepe's

¹In Los inventayochos, pp.35 ff., Sender speaks with approval Giovanni Papini's suggestion that God should pardon the Devil.

escape may have been responsible for the temporary upset of the uneasy balance between idealism and realism that Pepe showed in Casalmunia. For, in Barcelona, he manifested a singularly meritorical and optimistic faith in the value of Bazán and his political party, and in the revolutionary potential of Barcelona:

Era un teórico importante, un organizador, un hombre culto, Checa había sido valiente, pero rencoroso y su rencor (que oscurecía su personalidad) parecía justificado por las injusticias que había sufrido. Pero Bazán era una buena cabeza analítica y serena. No estaba con Cristo, ni con Buda, pero tampoco con Maquiavelo ni con Nietzsche. Estaba por decirlo así, con un Sócrates que hubiera vivido en tiempos de Esparta, como e inteligentemente trabajado por su victoria. (p.445 Vol.III)

Cataluña era rica y en la región más rica de España se producían los mejores revolucionarios, lo que me hacía pensar que había la posibilidad de una revolución no por el odio y el miedo (como la del mongoloide), sino por la riqueza, la cultura y el amor. Una superación afirmativa y serenamente inteligente. A eso me atenía yo. Sin embargo, no había que hacerse ilusiones. Buda, Proudhon, Gandhi eran el lado femenino del pensamiento. El lado virginal y violable. En la encrucijada en la que estábamos, había para cada uno de nosotros una bala perdida a la vuelta de cada esquina. Perdida o bien dirigida. Cuidado, pues, en nombre de Maquiavelo, Nietzsche y hasta en nombre del abuelo infernal Stalin. (p.446 Vol.III)

The reservations that end the second of the above quotations and the fact that for the first time as an adult Pepe was seeking a political party that corresponded to his ideals - which in itself represented an important advance in practicality - do not change the underlying reality of a recrudescence of Pepe's former, naive idealism. The point becomes clear in the reservations Ramón I expresses on the subject. Pepe had asked him if he was "with" Bazán's party:

- ¿Yo? Bastante hago si estoy conmigo mismo. Me han herido y ando convaleciente. ¿No ves que llevo un bastón?
(p.449 Vol.III)

Ramón I was someone whose judgement Pepe respected and he was not the kind of person who would sacrifice clarity of meaning for facile rhetorical effect with the object of winning sympathy. The other thing which reveals the naivety of Pepe's

judgment on Bazán's party is the fact that at the meeting Pepe attended, Bazán's party was making political capital out of their leader's death, which in fact had not taken place. The details emerge very much later (pp.569-571 Vol.III). The capacity for effecting a revolution through love is clearly tainted if part of the party's proselytising campaign was based on a series of lies, and if they had found it impossible to organise themselves in such a way as to prevent a man's public identity having more importance than his real life. Pepe could not help feeling amused:

Yo pensaba en Bazán diciéndome: "Allá quedó un hombre que teme a la muerte como cada cual, pero que al mismo tiempo no puede alegrarse de estar vivo". No era que sus colegas prefirieran su muerte, pero sin duda habrían querido matarlo como político y conservarlo como amigo entrañable. Rara situación aquella. (p.449 Vol.III)

But neither in Barcelona nor subsequently in Madrid was Pepe the naive idealist of his early adulthood. He could realistically face the fact that the Republicans would not be the immediate victors in the war, that the worthy cause for which he was fighting was almost certainly lost and his participation in the war was due to personally conceived moral and philosophic imperatives (pp.456-457 Vol.III). At the front to the north of Madrid, as an officer, he appears unconsciously to have aspired to unwavering moral vigilance and permanent wakefulness - he could not sleep at the front, presumably because of moral qualms at being close and party to killings - but he was finally to come to an extremely realistic and perceptive appreciation of the moral and physical problems of a man in war time:

...hay que tener cuidado porque si los hombres somos de veras honrados con nosotros mismos, aunque esa honradez nos tonifique en el plano moral, nos despierta demasiado en todos los demás y no podíamos dormir nunca. Nos invalida además para el combate inevitable contra todo

aquello que no somos nosotros mismos. Hay que renunciar a muchas virtudes que nos parecen consustanciales y aceptar nuestro papel inferior de máquinas de la risa... Hay que aceptarlo así, pero una vez aceptado no se sabe a dónde puede uno ir a parar. La vida es como es y yo no la he hecho... (p.530 Vol.III)

In other words, whilst recognizing the value of perpetual moral vigilance, he also recognised the importance of physical needs and the desirability of both satisfying and controlling them. Pepe was not temperamentally made for war, but he had sufficient understanding of himself, others and the war situation to realise that other men were different and that their different qualities were needed in war time. Thus of a general who had ordered the execution of men who had abandoned their positions, he could write:

Hombre tranquilo y bondadoso, había hecho, sin embargo, fusilar a algunas docenas de milicianos en los primeros días por haber abandonado el puesto. Los había matado con la indiferencia del que lleva a cabo una tarea rutinaria sin importancia mayor... Es verdad que después de aquellas ejecuciones, el frente se sostuvo mejor. (p.528 Vol.III)

It was only on the basis of a clear and perceptive understanding of what was real, possible and reasonable in the war situation that Pepé could find a role for himself - the defence of the secretary - through which to express the quintessence of his idealism. His initial aspiration had been to be militarily useful to a cause - the Republican one - which he was able to identify with his ideals (pp.456-457 Vol.III), but temperamentally, as has been stated, he was ill-equipped to be so. The defence of the secretary very quickly came to supersede Pepe's role as a soldier. In Pepe's view the defence of the secretary had a general and symbolic significance that went far beyond the cause of one particular man¹:

¹Pepe's attitude to the village secretary, and what he was trying to do at the secretary's trial, correspond exactly to Sender's attitude to Sabino and his intentions in writing El

...un ser vivo es más que un secretario o un campesino o un duque. Es la humanidad entera. Tenemos que mirarlo como vemos a nosotros mismos en un espejo. Un hombre cualquiera, además de ser todos los hombres, es un reflejo de Dios para los que saben mirar con atención.
(p.484 Vol.III)

Without Pepe's gaining in realism and practicality and without the diminution of his schizophrenia in respect of the world and others, I think it is unlikely that Pepe would have been able to perceive such a cause in a man who was so obviously a criminal. . Much more was involved than the idealism which, when Pepe was a boy, had made him attend the striker wounded in the streets of Zaragoza. Pepe had had to acquire an awareness of the humanity he shared with all other human beings, no matter who they were nor what they had done. For one such as Pepe who throughout his life had been passionately convinced of his uniqueness and the uniqueness of his relationship with Valentina, such an acquisition proved extremely difficult. But he did finally achieve it, at least temporarily, and could express an appreciation of the crucial difference between a man's perception of himself and the way other's see him:

...estuve pensando en el animal mecánico llamado Pérez o Rodríguez que siempre es un poco humorístico. Un hombre hablando en público, fumando, leyendo la Biblia u orinando contra una valla es una de las imágenes más cómicas que se puedan idear. (p.470 Vol.III)

A mí no me subían las ganas de defenderlo, al secretario, sino de mostrar a los demás un ejemplar diferente (yo mismo) de este muñeco de la risa que es cada una para los demás (menos para uno mismo.) (p.471 Vol.III)

Lugar de un hombre, as he explained to Peñuelas:

Es simplemente un alegato en favor del sentido universal de la presencia del hombre por el hecho de ser hombre, por el simple hecho de haber nacido. La importancia de ese hombre, quienquiera que sea, y el respeto que su presencia nos merece a todos... Si el hombre... no está dispuesto a ver en otro su propia imagen - bien vestido, mal vestido, sudado o limpio, enfermo o sano, inteligente o menos inteligente - el hombre pone en gran peligro a la sociedad y a la humanidad entera. Eso es lo que quiero decir en El lugar de un hombre. (pp.119-120.)

If evidence was required to assure the reader that Sender sympathises with at least part of what Pepe Garcés represents, despite the fact that at a number of crucial existential cross-roads they took different paths, this certainly provides it.

Como suele suceder, el lado sublime del amor de aquella pareja (Madrigal e Irene) me parecía grotesco y el caso nuestro (digo de Valentina y de mí mismo) me parecía en cambio tan sublime que no hablé nunca de él a nadie en los tres años que duró la guerra. No creía que existiera en el mundo nadie que mereciera aquel privilegio. Mientras pensaba esto, sospechaba que podía ser una gran tontería, pero "una tontería a los divinos". Así es el amor de cada cual - ese amor de que no se habla. (p.551 Vol.III)* (my parenthesis)

The perception of this crucial difference was not to free Pepe from behaving toward Madrigal as though he were essentially different from himself: after Madrigal had tried to trick Pepe into crossing the enemy lines, Pepe applied himself with relentless vigour to destroying Madrigal's sublime idyll (p.546 Vol. III). But the perception did mean that Pepe realised all men could suffer and experience existential anguish. Torla's evident fear, in Pepe's eyes redeemed him of his frivolousness, and the threat of death that hung over the village secretary made apparent how even he shared the essential human predicament:

Pensaba también en el secretario experto en gravámenes y gabelas municipales, que debía estar paseando con las manos en los bolsillos de la chaqueta, desde el presbiterio al baptisterio, usando el sistema de palancas de sus fémures y sus tibias para transportar una máquina que se acercaba a su fin. El acercarse al fin le quitaba de pronto la comicidad... (p.470 Vol.III)

Initially Pepe's involvement in the affair of the village secretary was quite involuntary - he was put under pressure to accompany the man who was going to arrest the secretary at a time when he, Pepe, was only half-conscious for lack of sleep - and his first movement that might be construed as his initiation in the secretary's defence was made in the interests of his own personal safety:

Yo le pedí un recibo (a López) pensando: "A lo mejor lo matan esta noche y el equívoco sangriento queda sobra mí." (p.469 Vol.III)

Subsequently, after he had pondered the political manoeuvring

that underlay the arrest and the bringing of the charge, and the near impossibility of the secretary being adequately represented, Pepe's participation in the affair became voluntary and total. Through the secretary, Pepe protested against everything that was unnecessarily appalling on the Republican side - López and his "servicios especiales" who sought to win the support of the villagers for the Communist party by the elimination of the unpopular secretary (p.485 Vol.III), the truculent moral sonambulism of both López's supporters as well as the villagers, whom Pepe knew full well could equally be persuaded to execute López and elect the secretary mayor (p.510 Vol.III) and not least the ease with which Pepe himself had become involuntarily involved in the arrest through a momentary and understandable relaxation of moral vigilance. It was of no consequence to Pepe that he might be risking his own safety (p.507 Vol.III). The principles at stake were too important for such considerations. It was of no consequence either that the secretary was indeed a criminal (pp.474-475 Vol.III). This was more than compensated for by the fundamentally unjust and inhumane manner of proceeding against him. Pepe knew that the case was lost from the start (p.475 Vol.III), but like the Republican cause itself, which would be irrevocably undermined by such travesties of justice as that, the worthiness of the cause justified the undertaking in all circumstances. Thus at the trial, Pepe urged the villagers not to be violent or vindictive in respect of the secretary, and not to ape the methods of the Nationalists. A man killed by the Republicans without justification would detract from the value of the Republican cause. (In this section of Pepe's argument one can detect an echo of Bazán's claim that the value of all human life is enhanced by a man's sacrificing himself for a principle or others (p.390 Vol.III.) Pepe's major plea, however, amounted to a statement of his perception of the value of all human

life: he sought to make the villagers aware of the existential problems and situation of the secretary; he tried to make them put themselves in the secretary's shoes and realise the difficulties of his life and his job in the village.

In terms of its immediate object - the acquittal of the secretary - Pepe's defence speech was a failure, as he knew it would be. But in more general terms, it did have a degree of success. Pepe did not effect radical conversions, as Bazán and the Lacambra brothers had done, but if Ceferino's enthusiastic declaration of support for Pepe's views can be ascribed to his personal animosity against López (p.497 Vol.III), and if Madrigal's sympathy derived from his having misunderstood what Pepe said (p.541 Vol.III), nevertheless, it does appear that the secretary himself was deeply impressed by all that Pepe had said. From the following exchange, in which Pepe is the first speaker and the secretary the second, some moral change in the secretary seems quite apparent:

-No parece usted muy convencido de mi sinceridad y no sé ni quiero saber de dónde viene su recelo. Tal vez usted piensa que si estuviéramos en el otro campo, y a mí me hubieran condenado a muerte, usted lo consideraría natural y no haría nada por salvarme.
-Posiblemente no, pero ¿quién sabe? (p.529 Vol.III)

What the defence speech seems to have done too was to prepare the men of López's "servicios especiales" for further plain speaking by Pepe. Thus when Pepe suggested that the Republican cause was lost many of López's special agents agreed, much to their leader's consternation. Furthermore, when Pepe went on to defend reason, mercy and pacifism against violence and vengeance, he was listened to with approval and respect, and his sharp reprimand to López went uncontested:

-Pero no le admiras tú, a Gandhi? - el comandante afirmó y dos o tres más dijeron lo mismo -. Entonces, si lo

admiras, ¿por qué hablas de él con desprecio? ¿Es que te consideras superior porque matas? La verdad es que matas por desesperación y porque no tienes valor para matarte a ti mismo. (p.505 Vol.III)

The final vindication of Pepe's point of view over López's was not to come until the end of the war when, as a footnote explains (p.502 Vol.III): in accordance with a promise he had made to Pepe, acknowledging his error, López voluntarily faced his own execution.

A further aspect of Pepe's defence of the secretary, of general as well as of particular interest, now needs to be discussed. From the time Pepe was in Casalmunia he had made frequent allusions to his father. Thinking of his early childhood during Bazán's trial, he felt both relief that his father did not know of his whereabouts and fear that he might discover them, lest he find himself in mortal danger (p.404 Vol.III). Flying with Torla away from Casalmunia, his sigh of relief was that he was out of the range of his father's potentially mortal influence (p.439 Vol.III). The reader tends to oscillate in his interpretation of comments such as these in which Pepe's father is made synonymous with his son's mortal danger, between considering them as products of a personal obsession and as having some objective justification. The reader's vacillations match Pepe's own: he both began to believe and emphatically rejected the possibility of Madrigal's being a special agent of his father's (p.508 and p.517 Vol.III). Yet on the basis of what López said (p.490 Vol.III), it seems clear that Pepe's father had indeed discovered the whereabouts of his son in Casalmunia. Sender's intention, which we must respect, is clearly to compel us to experience Pepe's own confusion on the subject. There is, however, no confusion in respect of Pepe's tendency to think more and more about his father, particularly in association with the Nationalists, after the advent

of the war. This tendency is quite understandable if one bears in mind that Pepe had come increasingly to link the Republican cause with the ideals he had formed in association with Valentina and that his life with Valentina had existed apart from and in opposition to his father. However, it is remarkable that Pepe should come to think so much about his father without glossing over any of his defects, when throughout all the rest of the memoirs he had not done so. Pepe's insistent and more realistic consideration of his father was part of the whole process of his increased awareness of the real world brought about by the Civil War and the dangers and problems associated with it. (See above p. 301) The bridge that he had constructed between the ideal world of Valentina and reality had linked in an entirely new way reality and the fundamental experiences of his early childhood in which both his father and Valentina had a place. The matter is particularly apparent in Pepe's defence of the village secretary. In the first place, Pepe's father had been a village secretary. The cruelties and injustices that his father had perpetrated against him and his mother, paralleled the crimes that the other village secretary had committed. For Pepe at one point, the past and the present became one eternal present in which he found it impossible to distinguish the two secretaries one from the other, or his responses to each of their evil acts. Thus when speaking as an adult of the reasons why, as a boy, he did not avenge the blow his father had given his mother, he attributes to his child's mind motives, options and a reasoning which could only belong to an adult:

Yo habría vengado a mi madre con gusto, pero la idea de matar a mi padre me parecía peligrosa no por las posibles consecuencias legales sino porque detrás de aquellos confusos deseos creía yo estar escuchando mugidos de animales antediluvianos.

(p. 472 Vol. III)

He wondered if his involuntary involvement in the arrest of the ...

secretary, his father's alter-ego, had not been an "inclinación inconsciente" (p.472 Vol.III) to kill his father (p.539 Vol.III) and later he was to wonder if his participation in the secretary's defence was not an attempt to take a curious revenge upon his father by humiliating him with an act of generosity (p.504 Vol.III). It is difficult to know precisely whether Pepe was being directed by his unconscious at this point or whether he was directing and resisting it. In either case it is quite apparent that Pepe's insistence on the value of clemency and his forceful repudiation of vengeance during the trial of the village secretary is directly related to Pepe's own childhood feelings for his father and in particular to those on the occasion his mother was hit. The possibility of seeing Pepe's participation in the affair of the secretary as being more or less an involuntary response to formative childhood experiences does of course swell the body of possible evidence, already considerable, for interpreting the whole of Pepe's life in psychologically deterministic terms. He was as he was because of what had happened to him in his early life and neither praise nor blame should be voiced in respect of either his thoughts or actions.

The sustained sympathetic attention that the defence of the secretary caused Pepe to pay to the man was, as has been stated, closely associated with Pepe's relationship to his father. One is tempted to suggest that the improvement in Pepe's attitude to his father was a consequence of this attention to the secretary, but the whole phenomenon is so complex and so difficult even for Pepe to grasp that it would seem equally reasonable to suggest that Pepe's defence of the secretary would not have been possible without there first being a change in

his attitude to the world, including his father. However, the improvement of Pepe's attitude is quite incontrovertible; over the period of the trial and Pepe's subsequent attempts to obtain a postponement of the execution, Pepe came to respect and finally love his father (p.539 Vol.III).

The period extending from the trial to Pepe's return to Casalmunia was one of extreme depression. The knowledge that he had just eloquently and forcefully protested to some effect against execrable features on the Republican side and that again as a soldier he was actively fighting for a cause he believed to be right and the expression of ideals, in no way attenuated his depression. He was deeply convinced of man's essential loneliness (pp.522-523 Vol.III) and experienced an existential anguish, possibly deriving from his failure during the trial to stay manifestations of man's propensity to injustice and violence, of a greater intensity than ever before (p.521 vol.III) The frustration and anguish which formerly had derived from the impossibility of being with Valentina, seemed - now that he confronted much more of the real world than formerly - to be transferred to a despair at having been unable to influence human nature in a significant way. I think it is reasonable to suggest that it was because of Pepe's general mood that he was pleased to be given the job of commanding the section of the front opposite to Casalmunia and that he so willingly undertook to investigate personally the mysterious happenings in the buildings in no-man's land (p.546 Vol.III). In those buildings he had known Villar, Bazán and the people and events which had shown how human nature could be transformed for the better.

If there had been something miraculous in the atmosphere

of Casalmunia when Pepe had left it, there was something more miraculous when he returned. Nationalists and Republicans rubbed shoulders and tolerated each other in an oasis of peace between the warring fronts. After a short time there, Pepe, whose former ambition had been to be militarily useful to the Republicans, entirely gave up the idea of returning to his command post (p.552 Vol.III). It seemed that in Casalmunia rather than in the Republican army his true ideals found expression:

Estoy tranquilo aquí, como si hubiera encontrado mi hogar
o por lo menos el lugar que me corresponde en el mundo.
(p.552 Vol.III)

The mutual fear and distrust that had so appalled Pepe in respect of López's men and the villagers who had wanted to kill the secretary, were almost absent in Casalmunia. The only fear people there experienced was of the war itself (pp.562-563 Vol.III). Among the innumerable details which could be mentioned by way of indication of how extraordinary the atmosphere of Casalmunia was, the return of birds, Pepe's ability to sleep (p.550 Vol.III), and the disorientation of Madrigal and Irene - who for the first time in their lives found themselves free from repressive authority (p.567 Vol.III) - may serve as examples. The odd position of Bazán may also be regarded as exemplary. He was in the one place in Spain where his life was least in danger: if he had been in the Nationalist zone, he would certainly have been executed as a dangerous revolutionary; if he had been in the Republican zone, members of his political party would have been sorely tempted to kill him to relieve themselves of a political embarrassment (p.570 Vol.III). He - and the same may be said of the other people in Casalmunia, including Pepe - was in the one place where the real man could live and not be threatened by groups and parties who would give mortal attention to his public mask and reputation.

Casalmunia was the one place in Spain where history had not stopped and where, though men retained their political affiliations these did not cause them to kill or be killed.

Pepe began to feel that life in Casalmunia was exemplary of what life should be:

Ante todo había que vivir, sencillamente. Como los otros y con los otros, era verdad. Unos buscaban víveres, otros hacían al amor, alguno hablaba con Dios, Iriarte preguntaba porqué no caía la tierra tan pesada, en el espacio; y todos trataban de justificar para sí mismos el hecho de no haber muerto todavía. Era aquella una tarea seria y natural y consciente. En eso consistía todo, quizás; en estar conscientes de vivir. En tiempos normales casi nadie lo estaba, y por eso todos caminaban dormidos. Sonámbulos.

(p.573 Vol.III) (My italics)

Two major things appeared to have brought about this change in the people of Casalmunia. Firstly, there were the examples of selflessness shown by Bazán and the Lacambra brothers. (I have already commented on how their actions affected the second lieutenant, Villar, the judge and the guards). In more general terms, however, one can see that all the people of Casalmunia had run or were running the risk of being killed - quite a number had been specifically under the sentence of death. I would suggest that this was the major thing that made them value life and trust each other. (Bazán certainly appears to have interpreted things in this way, for he suggested that the still aggressive second lieutenant should spend a night under sentence of death, arguing presumably that only that experience could affect the conversion that the examples of Bazán himself and the Lacambra brothers had begun.)

The people of Casalmunia, in one way or another, had been forced to learn the lesson that Pepe had been trying to teach the villagers who were determined to kill the secretary: they had been placed in the shoes of their own potential victims. This had both divested them of their potential for aggression and made them aware of both the miracle and ephemerality of

life. Their new attitudes were very much those of Segismundo in the final scene of La vida es sueño¹:

¿Qué os admira? ¿Qué os espanta,
si fue mi maestro un sueño,
y estoy temiendo en mis ansias
que he de despertar y hallarme
otra vez en mi cerrada
prisión? Y cuando no sea
el soñarlo sólo basta;
pues así llegué a saber
que toda la dicha humana,
en fin, pasa como un sueño.
Y quiero hoy aprovecharla
el tiempo que me durare...

Their cave was both a recent memory and a continuing reality in the war around Casalmunia.

Quite what a miracle and how ephemeral their lives in general were, only became apparent to the people of Casalmunia when they realised what was preventing the two sides from razing the place to the ground: astonishing good luck, and the resolution of a half-demented and almost totally unconscious woman (p.582 Vol.III) to look after the welfare of her newly born child. The actions of individuals - Blas, Bazán and the Lacambra brothers - certainly had a part to play in creating the atmosphere of tolerance and trust, but survival in Casalmunia was due entirely to the happy chance of the interests of the people there quite fortuitously coinciding with those of the species, which looked after itself through the blind instincts of a mother protecting her child. Life, in essence unknown and unknowable, was concerned with perpetuating itself. Pepe at least, could not help but feel awed at being both party to and part of that miracle:

La vida comenzaba sin duda entonces con el recién nacido,
que era como cada cual, hijo de la desesperación y del

¹Pedro Calderón de la Barca, La vida es sueño (ed A.E.Sloman, Manchester, 1961).

tedio. Pero ¿qué vida? ¿La de Bazán? ¿la mía?
 ¿La del alférez? ¿La del secretario con la boina
 calada? La vida de todos y la de nadie. Porque
 de nadie es la vida y ninguno de nosotros la merece...
 El crío y Blas, y la mujer lagarta por quien Blas
 pondría la mano en el fuego, eran las únicas personas
 que tenían razón en el mundo de entonces y que siguen
 teniéndola hoy, quizás. Gente merecedora. No es
 broma. Millones de infantuelos como aquel niño cuyo
 pañal tremolaba están naciendo ahora mismo alrededor
 del planeta, de ese viejo planeta girador que mueve
 sin que lo empujen y que no tiene dónde caerse.

(pp.582-582 Vol.III)

Birth and the mother's concern with the life of her baby placed
 the mortal aggression of war in perspective and made men aware
 of the very miracle which they had been intent on destroying.
 Paradoxically the war was life-affirming in that it forced
 people to realise the value of life, that life justified itself
 and no-one had the right to destroy it.

Two aspects of the Casalmunia situation may be regarded
 as miraculous in the sense that their meaning extended beyond
 the particular moment of their occurrence. These are the
 changes in the people there resulting in mutual tolerance and
 the species' interest in survival manifest in the mother's con-
 cern for her child. The non-destruction of Casalmunia, on
 the other hand, should be regarded as an extremely fortunate
 accident, the significance of which was limited to its exempli-
 fication of how much human life is dependent on chance.
 Though the fact of the chance survival of Casalmunia made
 clear the limitations of the exemplary courage of Bazán and the
 Lacambra brothers, it in no way diminished their achievement,
 in the same way that though chance affects the particular
 occasion on which conception takes place, the resultant life
 is no less a miracle. In short, Casalmunia, that oasis of
 peace within Spain at war, draws attention to two complementary
 miracles: the miracle of life itself and the miraculous
 potential for change and tolerance in human nature.

The eternal truths of Casalmunia outlive the accident of its destruction and, though the question is open to debate, one could reasonably argue that it is to Pepe's lack of realism rather than to his realism, to his discredit rather than to his credit, that one may attribute his final impatience to leave the place. I would suggest that had the Ramón Sender Pepe met been in Pepe's shoes - and the structure of the whole work invites this kind of comparison - though unhappy about the vulnerability of Casalmunia and the failure of the people there to apply themselves to the war situation around them, he would have felt less impatience than Pepe to leave. It is worth recalling the general observations he had made to Pepe:

...la vida es todo lo que tenemos. Enseñar a los hombres un poco de respeto por los hombres es lo que hizo Sócrates hace dos mil años y es lo que uno trata de hacer con sus pobres medios...Para mí, a pesar del vacío absoluto, la vida conserva sus valores intactos...Tú ahí y yo aquí, estamos vivos y gozamos aún del aire que respiramos como de un licor precioso. (pp.328-329 Vol.III)

Ramón Sender, though he might have had a number of reservations would have responded enthusiastically to the affirmation of life and tolerance that was Casalmunia.

Pepe did so too, at least temporarily, and at the end of what we know of his life there, with his attention drawn to the mother and her new born child, we can see the last piece of the jigsaw of his understanding and his conscious adjustment to the world and reality had been fitted into place. He had incorporated a profound respect for the value of life into his vision of the world and reality. But the deepest reaches of Pepe's mind could only be slightly affected by his adult experiences and conscious reasoning. As he himself had reflected during Bazán's trial:

No hay duda de que a esa temprana edad (nueve años)
estamos ya formados o deformados para siempre.
(p.408 Vol.III)

Thus it was that the immediate pleasures and satisfactions that
life in Casalmunia afforded him came to be associated at an
early stage with the hope of Valentina's joining him there, in
the same way that his search for physical safety at the beginning
of the war had been one with his search for Valentina:

Días hubo, especialmente en la mañana, que yo miraba con
los gemelos el camino de los nacionales y cualquier
sombra, cualquier cosa que movía, una mata arrancada por
las granadas y arrastrada por la brisa, me parecían ella.
Me quedaba una hora o más esperando y cuando veía que no
llegaba Valentina me retiraba inquieto...

(p.551 Vol.III)

It was with the object of meeting Valentina that he set out one
day from Casalmunia on a motor-cycle (p.556 Vol.III). It was
partly thoughts of Valentina that made him impatient to leave
Casalmunia permanently (p.565 Vol.III) and I would suggest that
when at one point he questioned the sufficiency of life in Casal-
munia,

Bien - acepté yo, sin convicción - Vivir. Pero ¿para qué?
(p.573 Vol.III)

it was because of his general permanent disposition, deriving
from childhood and closely associated with the place of Valentina
in it, to look for an ideal beyond life in order to justify it.
This restless pursuit of the ideal which had characterised the
whole of Pepe's life, though attenuated and channelled from the
beginning of the war, remained with him in Casalmunia. Though
there is a certain ambiguity in respect of Pepe's state of
mind in the very last section of this notebook - it is not al-
together clear whether his impatience to leave Casalmunia
disappeared after the confession of the second lieutenant and
his reflections on the woman and her new baby - it would seem
that his impatience stayed with him till the very end. (If

he had been finally and totally convinced of the values represented by Casalmunia, he would have seen point in ensuring his own survival even after the fall of Madrid and Valencia.)

There is something very sad in Pepe's final inability to accept the reality of Casalmunia. By that time he had succeeded in overcoming so much of the extravagance of his early idealism and channelled - in the defence of the secretary - its quintessence into morally exemplary activities. He had applied himself wholeheartedly to the real world and practical problems and had perceived the limited but real potential for human endeavour and achievement. He had recognised the intrinsic value of human life after a long period in which he had contemplated suicide. He had finally perceived the us and them dualism and urged others to recognise it too. He had even in his second visit to the cobertizos - come to dominate and explode the dualism in respect of the Civil War and his father. On that occasion he describes - like the other cobertizos scene, this is primarily a subjective projection of Pepe's thoughts, feelings and internal conflicts - the essential unity underlying the Spanish conflict and his essential oneness with his father. He saw that La Cosa, which had formerly represented the recent attempts made by radical elements in Spanish society to transform that society, had a history going back thousands of years:

"La Cosa me llaman. La Cosa que durante milenios y milenios antes de que el hombre hubiera dominado el fuego tenía que emigrar con sus cuatro mil hijos y sus quinientas hembras por los caminos buscando la tierra templada para no perecer de frío en invierno. La tierra templada que tenía animales de caza y sol y agua para beber. Cuatro mil hijos a los que en su mayoría había que castrar para que no se acostaran clandestinamente con mis hembras. Yo dejaba algunos de ellos enteros, los que más me parecían a mí, para que la covada continuara en condiciones de prestigio. Y andábamos los caminos de un mundo sin caminos aún, peleando con las fieras en la noche y con otros padres y otros hijos en el día. Porque las tierras

del sol y de los animales de venatería estaban ya habitadas y había que conquistarlas con hachas de sílex y con ondas a distancia y a peñazo limpio, como tú y el Bronco."
(pp.558-559 Vol.III)

Twentieth century struggles to transform Spanish society were an expression of the same millenarian struggle for survival and the improvement of conditions of living. Without the original struggle the species would not have survived. In the twentieth century, conflicts in society derived from disputes between sections of society tied to different historical periods (pp. 392-393 Vol.III). The authoritarianism of Pepe's father - Bronco's primitive behaviour patterns - and the authoritarianism of the Nationalists still bore the mark of their neolithic origins. The dependence of the existence of twentieth century society with its conflicts, on its neolithic forebears was no less apparent than Pepe's own life being dependent on his father. Furthermore, Pepe understood more fully and clearly than ever before that all his idealism and all his later affiliation within the ranks of those who fought to transform the society of modern Spain was entirely a product of his father's neolithic behaviour to him as a boy:

Si mi padre no me hubiera doblado a palizas antes de alcanzar uso de la razón, tal vez yo sería un buen ciudadano... (p.561 Vol.III)

(To appreciate the full force of the above one should bear in mind that Juan Pérez, who had killed his neighbour, also called Juan Pérez, for money, had been regarded as a "buen ciudadano"). A similar general point may be made in respect of the source of the Republican movements which sought to change Spanish society. They sprang up in response to the repression exercised by reactionary neolithic sections of society. All this Pepe had succeeded in understanding and with that understanding had come an ability to lament and fear all that was destructive in

the period of conflict (p.561 Vol.III). He was also able to love his father (p.558 Vol.III) and see him as a fellow-sufferer of existential anguish (p.562 Vol.III), and to recognise that not only might his cruelty to the boy have been an expression of love (p.560 Vol.III), but also that, in any case, it might well have been the product of the same kind of psychological determinism that had made Pepe a rebel (p.567 Vol.III)

It might have been expected that Pepe's grasp of the aetiology of the Civil War, his own psychology and his relationship with his father, would have freed him from the determining factors he perceived. But this was not to be the case. As has been stated, no sooner had he returned to Casalmunia from the cobertizos than he felt impatience to leave it, and the concluding pages of the book show him bereft of all will to live, clearly committed to the last both to the ideal represented by Valentina and the hope of a Republican victory. Even his grasp of something of the ethical complexity of reality - examples of life-enhancing heroism had come out of the Civil War, an appreciation of the value of human life had come out of danger and death, his idealism and its practical channelling were products respectively of his father's beating and physical danger at the beginning of the war: i.e. good could come of evil - was unable to change his essential patterns of behaviour and feeling. But if this implies a criticism of Pepe, the last pages of the work imply that Pepe's importance and influence did not die with him and that something of value might remain; as the manuscript collector reflected:

Recordando al poeta, me dije: "Antes de que se sequen tus huesos se olvidará tu nombre." O tal vez no. Quién sabe. (p.584 Vol.III)

Pepe's inability to free himself from the determining influence of his childhood or his commitment to his ideals, might well

constitute a life and reality-transforming legend, perhaps in the manner of the Lacambra brothers. Furthermore, the eloquence and moral validity of his defence of man at the trial of the secretary - as integral an expression of his essential character as his later suicide - were in no way diminished by his death and it might be hoped that they would initiate a chain of moral example of lasting significance.

On the simplest level Crónica, like The Affable Hangman, has a lot to offer the general reader as a reflection of Spanish society during the first four decades of the twentieth century. We see life in tiny villages, small towns, provincial capitals, Madrid and Barcelona. The major influences that shaped and dominated Pepe's life were typical of the period in question, i.e. paternal authoritarianism, Catholicism and its effects upon the relations between the sexes, anti-clericalism, anarchism and labour conflicts. Thousands of Spaniards had to do their military service in Morocco and the heady and unreal atmosphere of the Second Spanish Republic was part of the national experience, and though, in terms of Pepe's life, such things corresponded to a period when the outside world was largely a matter of indifference, the character and nature of events are quite apparent. With less qualifications, the same may be said of the period of the Civil War, for though Pepe's perspective was always an individual one, his observations are quite free from dogmatism. He recognised idealism on both sides and equally the barbarism and injustice which characterised both Republican and Nationalist paramilitary procedures. Pepe was undoubtedly an individual and features of his life bear the stamp of his individuality, but I would suggest there is more validity than not in Sender's suggestion that Pepe was

in many ways typical of his generation (p.330 Vol.III footnote).

The prime focus of interest in Crónica is upon Pepe Garcés' psychology. Sender displays a quite extraordinary sensitivity to the factors that form a personality and to the relationship between the psychology of an individual and the philosophy and views he holds. The presentation of the way Pepe elaborates an image and view of himself to defend himself against the intolerable and demeaning treatment of him by his father, and how that self-image assimilates or rejects features of the adult world in accordance with psychological need and objective circumstances, are quite masterly. Particularly impressive and convincing is the demonstration of how, on the basis of a religious upbringing and a need to attack the principle by which his father had undermined him, Pepe moves to a position of violent anti-clericalism and anti-capitalism, initially, at least, with only a limited understanding of them. As he matured, of course, he became an eloquent and persuasive apologist for the views he had first adopted in response to largely unconscious motivation. The problem of Pepe's adjustment to reality, both as boy and man, and the relationship between his subjective world with its hopes and ideals to the world around him, form the core of the book.

At the end of Crónica a central ambivalence remains in respect of Pepe Garcés. In part, this ambivalence stems from the structure of the work: the first person narrative makes Pepe an elusive figure in the sense that we only see him from his own point of view. The few comments made by the editor do not penetrate the mystery. Neither do the implicit comments on Pepe that emerge from his actions or the reactions of other people to him. One does, it is true, slowly acquire, in the

course of reading Crónica, models against which Pepe might be compared - Checa, his grandfather, Lucas, Benito, Bronco, and the various Ramones - and it becomes clearer what Pepe is and what he is not, but fundamental questions as to what he is, how his mind works, and above all his moral and intellectual value, remain open to the end. One does not know for example to what extent Pepe should be considered as a victim and product of his particular family background and social circumstances, or as a free agent. Both interpretations have much to commend them. It can reasonably be argued, as Pepe himself does, that but for his father's beatings neither as boy nor adult would he have behaved in the way he did. And one might add that had the fortunes of Pepe and his family not been so divergent from those of Valentina and hers, and had his relationship with her been able to continue as it did not, then he would never have elaborated the ideals he did, Valentina would not have become a disembodied essence and his adjustment to reality would have been very different from what it was. On the other hand, Pepe's capacity for self-questioning and certain aspects of his defence of the village secretary seem to betoken a self-awareness and conscious resolution one would only expect from a free agent. These unanswered questions are related to questions as to Pepe's moral and intellectual worth. If Pepe is to be considered a product of his family background and his social circumstances, it is clearly idle to praise him for his defence of the village secretary or blame him for his unfairness and cruelty to Isabel, though undoubtedly what he says in defence of the secretary and what is undeniably beautiful and life-enhancing in his conception of Valentina have an intrinsic value irrespective of what motivated them. The questions

that the work poses for the reader are the same questions that Pepe puts to himself. He too is unsure, for example, of what precisely is involved in his defence of the secretary, and he oscillates between thinking that the Republican cause is worth fighting for even though it was lost, and that perhaps, after all, he should have sold the gun and thereby won Valentina (p.450 Vol.III). In other words, he was unsure on what ultimate values to build his life. The problems of the reader in his relationship with Pepe Garcés parallel those of his relationship with Ramiro Vallemediano in The Affable Hangman. The structure of both books invited identification with the protagonist. As the stage on which both protagonists make their decisions becomes more dangerous and morally involved, the reader has to decide whether the protagonist merits that identification and if not, why not.

Associated with the ambivalence of the figure of Pepe Garcés, is the question of the relationship of Pepe Garcés to the author, whose names he bears. Crónica both is and is not an autobiographical work. It is quite clear that many of the major experiences of Pepe Garcés' life at least parallel those of the author. It is also quite clear that there is a close parallel between the preoccupations of the two men up to the end of the Civil War: the meeting of Pepe and Sender establishes this. But that meeting also establishes the differences between the two men. They may have had the same problems and faced similar experiences, but in crucial ways they responded to them differently. A brief look at Sender's life and thought - as seen in what he wrote - up to the time of the Civil War would similarly establish differences between Pepe Garcés and Sender. Pepe then is not Ramón Sender up to 1939 but one,

and possibly the most important, of the fictionalised existential variants of Ramón Sender up to 1939. The ex-future self Sender would have been had he at various crucial points in his life taken different options from those he did. Pepe's importance over the other existential variants, the other Ramones, lies in the fact that the decisions he took were precisely the ones that Sender had been most tempted to take but in the event rejected. The various footnotes in which I indicate the points of divergence between Sender's life and Pepe's - particularly in respect of sex and Valentina - show what these major decisions were. Now I would suggest that the major significance of Crónica in terms of Sender's life, work and intentions lies in his presentation, exploration and reconsideration of his thoughts and actions up to 1939. With the passage of time, Sender's self-doubts - a characteristic evident in him before 1939 - urged him to reconsider the whole of his earlier life and thought. Crónica was the result. Through it Sender presents sympathetically and disinterestedly his alternative life. No small degree of courage was required. When embarking on the exercise he must have known it would be painful. Perhaps the major risk lay in the possibility that both he and impartial readers might come to prefer the potential self that the real Sender had destroyed many years before by electing to live on after 1939. It would appear however that Sender's self-investigation did not relieve him of his doubt and ambivalence. Certainly the life and character of Pepe Garcés express that doubt and ambivalence.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

In their different ways The Affable Hangman, Emen hetan, Las criaturas and the nine novels of Crónica reflect two central preoccupations of Sender's - what is reality and how a man should adjust to it.

In The Affable Hangman, the preoccupations are primarily moral and philosophical. Ramiro Vallemediano wants to know what is the essential nature of the reality in which he is required to live, and whether he can find within it a role for himself he can square with his moral conscience. He is unsure of himself at every stage. He is quite certain that at particular points in his life he has made mistakes, and he changes both his mind and the direction of his life on several occasions. His doubts remain with him when he finally commits himself to becoming the public executioner.

Emen hetan too centres on the nature of reality and the problems of adjustment to it. The lives and psychology of Spic and Agueda illustrate the difficulties that arise when people suffer serious disappointments of one kind or another, and how the latter can make them think and behave in extraordinary ways in order to give their lives and reality some kind of intelligibility. Satanism, or at least Spic's version of it, constitutes a stimulating if extravagant attempt to improve on Catholicism's metaphysical account of reality and the place of evil within it.

In Las criaturas, the universality of the problems of Spic and Agueda is made clear. The whole world is seen addressing itself to trying to understand itself and its place in the universal scheme of things. Some attempts are naive, others largely unconscious, others again are both conscious and extremely sophisticated. Though evaluative criteria are often implicit, and certain explanations have more to commend them than others, the only clear truths that emerge are that the problems are universal, and that no solutions can be wholly relied upon to ensure the physical safety or psychological equanimity of individuals in a world from which they are essentially alienated.

Crónica, indeed, suggests, it may well be that man may never be able to adjust or understand the world in which he finds himself, but it also suggests, equally persuasively, that the temptations to escape and suicide may be felt to deny man's unique possession, his life in a world he can neither understand nor adjust to.

The structure of these four works closely mirrors their philosophical and psychological themes. In none of them can the reader find an omniscient authoritative author or narrator to explain, or to guide him in his evaluations of characters or ideas. What guidance there is, is implicit and only gained by the reader's active involvement, and then leads to paradox, contradiction or layer upon layer of ambiguity or irony. Thus Spic - Emen hetan - is a charlatan and unstable, and his ideas a mixture of self-justification, exaggeration and also quite evident truth. Cagliostro, with his background of deception and chicanery, cannot be relied on either, but there is much in what he says to persuade that he, and only he in Las

criaturas, has some insight into reality and the human condition. Certainly there is validity in his general strictures on reason and Christianity. In respect of Pepe Garcés and Ramiro Vallemediano who, with their own account of their lives, dominate respectively Crónica and The Affable Hangman, the problem of evaluation is even greater. Not only are they, as real or quasi first-person narrators, elusive, since both they and their world are seen almost exclusively through their eyes, but the one is a suicide and the other a hangman. In other words, the sympathy and attention their lengthy account of themselves demands, is finely countered by the reader's inevitable reaction to what for each man was his most crucial existential commitment. Furthermore, neither the protagonists themselves not anyone else within the works in which they appear, is able to resolve the equally balanced cases for and against their free will or determinism.

Neither Sender's concern for these themes nor their expression in novels of considerable complexity and ambiguity are to be found in his works written before the Spanish Civil War. In themes and structure the pre-Civil War works were much simpler. Sender certainly felt that man was alienated, but he also felt that the evil system that caused the alienation of Spaniards in the Spain of the 1920s and 1930s could be destroyed and with it the condition of alienation - if not for all individuals in their own lifetime, certainly for Spanish society in future generations. So firm was Sender's conviction that man's alienation was temporary and soluble, he was less interested in exploring it exhaustively as something of inherent and permanent importance, than in advancing the process of its solution. In his own words he was writing "una literatura de

combate inmediato". (One might add, "in a fight the victory of which was soon to be achieved".) In consequence whatever the contradictions, paradoxes and ironies of the immediate situation of man and society at that time, and whatever the difficulties, not least of a practical nature, with which the solutions to alienation were then fraught, Sender could write about the Spaniards and Spain of his time without fundamental irony or ambivalence.

That fundamental irony and ambivalence were to be his manner after the Civil War, when changes for the better seemed often impossible or at best possible only to a degree. Sender's post-Civil War attitudes cannot be summarised or conveyed through a single phrase or quotation. Something of the range of his general post-Civil War attitudes may be gathered by considering the following comments that he made in response to a question of Peñuelas (in Conversaciones) on his feelings as to the future and the grounds for hope in respect of mankind, together with what he had said on an earlier occasion (see above p.154).

(Mejoramiento) de la humanidad, no. Mejoramiento de las condiciones económicas de la sociedad, sí. Pero la humanidad seguirá siempre siendo una masa confusa de animales medio ciegos que están tratando de superar la animalidad de un modo y otro. En definitiva, la humanidad no es sino una abstracción que nosotros hemos inventado. Ahora bien, el hombre corre detrás de la felicidad. Pero la felicidad no existe tampoco. Si tratamos de aceptar esa posibilidad como un hecho vamos a pensar, como Spinoza, que la felicidad es el paso de un estado de perfección a otro estado de perfección superior. Pero las dos formas de perfección son dos ilusiones. De modo que tal cosa como la felicidad, por la que todo el mundo suspira, lucha y detrás de la cual corre, no existe realmente. No existe, fuera del ámbito de los recursos secretos e imaginativos del individuo. No está en su bolsillo, en su banco, en su dinero o en su sensualidad, sino en lo que podemos llamar pedantemente su plano ontológico con la dimensión metafísica, es decir, religiosa. Ahí el hombre puede alcanzar ciertos estados de

armonía que valen tanto como la ilusión de la felicidad. Y eso es todo. (pp.200-201).

In other words, at best the solution to alienation can only be achieved on an individual level and, in view of the difficulties of achieving even that, a man would be well advised to take realistic stock of his condition of alienation and draw from it what real compensations it offers.

It was the Civil War and Sender's experiences during the latter period of the Second Spanish Republic that changed his ideas and manner of writing. The Civil War and the Nationalist victory challenged all Sender's assumptions in respect of foreseeable solutions to man's alienation. For these reasons, then, man's alienation has such a prominent place in Sender's post-Civil War works, and for these reasons too, the post-Civil War works pose problems and questions rather than offer solutions. Sender had been fundamentally wrong once in respect of the nature of reality, and perhaps too he felt he had misled his pre-Civil War readers. Hence, subsequently, he concerned himself with the presentation of the difficulties both of understanding reality and of adjustment to it, drawing heavily on his own experiences in the process. Furthermore, in what amounts to an extraordinary process of self-questioning and self-criticism he explored his own past life and thought - particularly in The Affable Hangman and Crónica - inviting the reader to consider and evaluate both what had been and what might have been. The decision to leave Spain towards the end of 1938, was without doubt one of the most crucial, existential choices Sender has ever been called upon to make. Characteristically, the lives, psychology and moral validity of Ramiro Vallemediano and Pepe Garcés, Sender's existential variants in respect of that crucial decision, are presented as open questions.

Finally, Sender's concern with understanding reality and adjusting to it are not only the major themes of his post-Civil War novels, they are also the reasons for his continuing to write. His novels are as much a search for illumination for him, as he hopes they may be an illumination¹ for his reader. Furthermore, as Sender's own comments make absolutely clear in a world from which he is essentially alienated, it is through a search for illumination and through the exploration of his own doubts and questions, in his written work, that a writer such as Sender achieves the only possible adjustment to reality open to him. The following passage is taken from Conversaciones.

Todo auténtico artista lo que hace a lo largo de su vida es tratar de compensar su esquizofrenia, por decirlo en términos de sicopatología. Estamos empeñados en la lucha con la realidad. Todos... La mayor parte de los hombre se adaptan o no se adaptan, van tirando, que es lo que quieren, tienen su cheque a fin de mes, viven, y a otra cosa. Pero el artista quiere resolver esa imposibilidad de estar de acuerdo con lo real, con todo lo que representa lo otro, lo que no es él. Por eso, para decir de alguien que está loco, la sicología clásica dice que está "alienado", es decir, que no ha podido reintegrarse, que se ha perdido en lo otro... El artista resuelve esa contradicción entre sí mismo y todo lo que no es él - lo otro - escribiendo su obra. Su obra es una síntesis de esa contradicción. La vida de uno en soledad es una tesis; "lo otro", la realidad con que uno choca en cada minuto, en cada segundo es la antítesis. La síntesis es la obra. Si Dostoyewski no hubiera escrito su obra habría muerto probablemente en un sanatorio de enfermos mentales. Y antes de él es mucho más obvio el caso de Gogol, entre los rusos, que eran los mejores en el siglo XIX. Si Gogol no hubiera escrito Las almas muertas habría sido un loco agresivo, probablemente. Con Las almas muertas fue un loco pacífico. Era el hombre más extraño del mundo en la historia de la literatura... Así tenemos, por ejemplo, a Tolstoi, que muere a los noventa años fuera de su hogar, en una estación de ferrocarril, como es sabido. Pero Tolstoi tuvo una vida feliz a pesar de todo. Escribió su gran obra, puso de acuerdo su yo mas secreto y difícil con todo lo otro y pudo

¹See Peñuelas: Conversaciones, p.91

terminar en un estado de armonía interior que es el ideal que cada cual debe perseguir y lo más que podemos alcanzar cualquiera que sean las circunstancias. (pp.269-270).

The Spanish Civil War changed Ramón Sender who, on the basis of his early novels, was an important writer, into an outstanding novelist of works of permanent value. In their way, the post-Civil War works are more disturbing and revolutionary in effect than anything Sender wrote before 1939 and anyone who suggests Sender's lasting importance is political fundamentally misinterprets him and his best work.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SECTION ONE - Works by Sender

The list is of first editions, in chronological order. Where reference in the thesis has been made to any other edition, the latter is indicated by an asterisk, and mentioned immediately after the first edition. Second or third editions which differ at all from first editions are listed in chronological order.

A Full-length Novel

Imán (Madrid, 1930)

O.P. (Orden publico) (Madrid, 1931) and, with a preface by Sender, (Mexico, 1941) - * later incorporated in part in El verdugo afable, see below.

El verbo se hizo sexo (Madrid, 1931) - Sender would have this omitted from the canon of his work, see above p. 12, and replaced by Tres novelas teresianas see below.

Siete domingos rojos (Barcelona, 1932) - recently modified to become Los tres sorores, see below.

La noche de las cien cabezas (Madrid, 1934) - later incorporated in part in El verdugo afable, see below.

Míster Witt en el cantón (Madrid, 1936)

Proverbio de la muerte (Mexico, 1939) - later shortened slightly and modified to become La esfera, see below.

El lugar del hombre (Mexico, 1939) - later appeared under the title El lugar de un hombre (Mexico, 1958) and (Barcelona 1968)*

Epitalamio del prieto Trinidad (Mexico, 1942)

Crónica del alba (Mexico, 1942) - to become the first of a series of six and then nine novels under the same title, see below.

La esfera (Buenos Aires, 1947) - see above Proverbio de la muerte, and below The Sphere.

The King and Queen (London, 1948) - a translation of El rey y la reina, see below, by Mary Lowe but published before it.

El rey y la reina (Buenos Aires, 1949)

The Sphere (New York, 1949) - a translation, by Felix Giovanelli, of La esfera (1947) but very much changed by Sender. Much later this changed version was published in Spanish, see below La esfera.

The Sphere (London, 1950) - a translation by F. Giovanelli, see above The Sphere.

El verdugo afable (Santiago de Chile, 1952) - considerably modified to become The Affable Hangman, see below.

Mosén Millán (Mexico, 1953) - later appeared under the title Réquiem por un campesino español, see below.

The Affable Hangman (London, 1954) and (London, 1964)^x - a translation, by Florence Hall, Sender's wife, of El verdugo afable, see above, but very much changed by Sender. Later in El verdugo afable, see below, he was to undo many of these changes.

Hipogrifo violento (Mexico, 1954) - later became the second of a series of six and later nine novels under the general title Crónica del alba, see below.

Ariadna (Mexico, 1955) - later became the first part of Los cinco libros de Ariadna, see below.

Bizancio (Mexico, 1956)

La "Quinta Julieta" (Mexico, 1957) - later became the third of a series of six and later nine novels under the general title Crónica del alba, see below.

Los cinco libros de Ariadna (New York, 1957) - see above Ariadna.

Emen hetan (Mexico, 1958) - later modified and incorporated into Las criaturas saturnianas, see below.

Los laureles de Anselmo (Mexico, 1958)

El mancebo y los héroes (Mexico, 1960) - later became the fourth of a series of six and later nine novels under the title of Crónica del alba, see below.

Réquiem por un campesino español (New York, 1960) - see above Mosén Millán.

La tesis de Nancy (Mexico, 1962) - continued in Nancy, doctora en gitanería and Nancy y el bato loco, see below.

La luna de los perros (New York, 1962)

Carolus Rex (Mexico, 1963)

Crónica del alba (New York, 1963) - two volumes containing six novels. The first four, Crónica del alba, Hipogrifo violento, La "Quinta Julieta" and El mancebo y los héroes had all been published before, see above. La onza de oro and Los niveles del existir were published for the first time.

La aventura equinocial de Lope de Aguirre (New York, 1964)

El bandido adolescente (Barcelona, 1965)

Crónica del alba (Barcelona, 1965-66) and (Madrid, 1971)*. Three volumes containing nine novels. The first six had been published before, see above Crónica del alba. Los términos del presagio, La orilla donde los locos sonríen and La vida comienza ahora were published for the first time.

Tres novelas teresianas (Barcelona, 1967) - a re-working of El verbo se hizo sexo, see above.

Las criaturas saturnianas (Barcelona 1968)

Nocturno de los catorce (New York, 1969)

En la vida de Ignacio Morel (Barcelona, 1969)

*La esfera (Madrid, 1969) - an adaptation by Sender based on The Sphere, see above.

Tánit (Barcelona, 1970)

Zu, el ángel anfibio (Barcelona, 1970)

El verdugo afable (Mexico, 1970) - substantially, the same as El verdugo afable, see above.

La antesala (Barcelona, 1971)

El fugitivo (Barcelona, 1972)

Una virgen llama a tu puerta (Barcelona, 1973)

Túpac Amaru (Barcelona, 1973)

Nancy, doctors en gitanería (Madrid, 1974) - a continuation of La tesis de Nancy, see above, it was continued in Nancy y el bato loco, see below.

Nancy y el bato loco (Madrid, 1974)

La mesa de las tres moiras (Barcelona, 1974)

Las tres sorores (Barcelona, 1974) - a re-working of Siete domingos rojos, see above.

Cronus y la señora con rabo (Madrid, 1974)

El futuro comenzó ayer (Madrid, 1975).

B Stories/Short Novels

- i. Collections or individual works, published as books, in chronological order, with indications of earlier publication in journals or books.

Mexicayotl (Mexico, 1940) - nine short stories: Totl o el valle, El puma, El águila, Los peces, Xocoyotl o el desierto, Nanyotl o la montaña, Ecatl o el lago, El zopilote and Navatl o el volcán. In a shortened, modified form the last five later appeared in Novelas ejemplares de Cíbola, see below.

La llave (Montevideo, 1960) - three short stories: La llave - had previously appeared as a play, "the Key", in The Kenyon Review (vol.5, No.17, Winter 1943, Ohio) -, La hija del doctor Velasco. and La fotografía del aniversario - previously published in Cuadernos americanos (vol.60, no.6, Nov.-Dec., 1951, Mexico.)

Novelas ejemplares de Cíbola (New York, 1961) - twelve short stories, five from Mexicayotl, see above, plus La madurez del profesor St John - part appeared previously as "The Tale of the Hot Land" in Partisan Review (vol.16 no.3, March 1949, New Brunswick, New Jersey) - Los invitados del desierto - part appeared as "Cocktail Party in Santa Fe" in The American Mercury (vol. 73 no.331, July 1951 New York) - El cetro, El padre Zozobra - part appeared as "El gato negro" in Cuadernos americanos (vol. 44 no.2, March-April 1949, Mexico) - La terraza - appeared as "The Terrace" in Partisan Review (vol.27 no.4, Autumn 1960, New Brunswick, New Jersey) - Aventura en Bethania, and Delgadina - appeared in New Mexico Quarterly (vol.30, no.3, Autumn 1960, Albuquerque).

Los tontos de la Concepción (Sandoval, 1963) - one short novel.

Caberizas altas (Mexico, 1965) - three short stories Cabrerizas altas, El tonatiu - appeared as "The Tonatiu" in Tales of Cíbola (New York 1964) -, and Las rosas de Pasadena, Cabrerizas was incorporated into the nine novel version of Crónica del alba, see above, El tonatiu appeared as El extraño señor Photynos, see below.

Las gallinas de Cervantes y otras narraciones parabólicas (Mexico, 1967) - four short stories: Las gallinas de Cervantes, El sosia y los delegados - appeared in Panoramas (vol.3, no.18, Nov.-Dec. 1965, Mexico) -, Parábola de Jesús y el inquisidor - appeared as "Al margen de Dostoiewski: Parábola de Jesús y el inquisidor" in Política (vol.4, no.46, Feb. 1966, Caracas) -, and Aventura del Angelus 1.

El extraño señor Photoynos y otras novelas americanas (Barcelona 1968) - five short stories: El extraño señor Photoynos and Las rosas de Pasadena - both published before in Caberizas, altas, see above -, Los tontos de la Concepción - see above -, La luz roja - appeared as "The Red Light" in Southwest Review (vol. 48 no.3, Summer 1963, Dallas, Texas) - and El amigo que compró un Picasso.

Novelas del otro jueves (Mexico, 1969) - seven short stories: four - published previously in Las gallinas de Cervantes y otras novelas parabólicas, see above -, plus El regreso de Edelmiro, El urucuru and El viaducto.

Relatos fronterizos (Mexico, 1970) - seventeen short stories: Aventura de Texas, Adiós, pájaro negro, Utrillo, En el Gran Canyon, Chesman, A bordo de un avión, El calendario azteca, Despedida en Bourg Madame, Gaceta del acabamiento de Neuendorf, Un pseudo, Manuela en Copacabana, Pantera negra, Germinal, Aquel día en El Paso, De las memorias del profesor N. and Velada en Acapulco.

- ii Individual works published in journals and contributions to books, otherwise unavailable. This list may well be incomplete.

"The journey" in The Spanish Omnibus (tr. W.B.Wells, introduction Henri Barbusse, London 1932).

"The Dancing Witch" in Heart of Europe (ed. K.Mann and H.Kesten, New York, 1943). An incident in El lugar de un hombre, see above.

"Tale from the Pyrenees" in Quarterly Review of Literature (vol. 1 no.2, Winter 1944, Princeton, New Jersey).

"The Broken Bell" in Pacific (vol.1, no.4, May 1946, Oakland).

"Miss Slingsby" in Suplementos de "Las Españas" (no.3, April 1949, Mexico).

"The Clouds Did Not Pass" in The Pen in Exile (ed. Paul Tabori, vol.1, London 1954). An incident in El verdugo afable (1952) and The Affable Hangman, see above.

"The Old Wetback" in Southwest Review (vol.40, no.4, Autumn 1955, Dallas, Texas).

"Lo mejor que Dios ha hecho: un día detrás de otro" in Cuadernos Del Congreso Por La Libertad De La Cultura (no.58, March 1962, Paris).

"The Wind" in New Mexico Quarterly (vol.33, no.2, Summer 1963, Albuquerque).

C Theatre

i Collections of plays or individual plays published as books.

El secreto (Madrid, 1935)

Hernán Cortés (Mexico, 1940)

El diante (Mexico, 1958)

Jubileo en el Zócalo (New York, 1964)

Don Juan en la mancebía (Mexico, 1968)

Comedia del diante y otras dos (Barcelona, 1969) - three plays:
Comedia del diante - previously published as El diante, see above -, Los antofagastas and Donde crece la marihuana - previously published in La Estafeta Literaria (nos. 362-364, Jan. 28, Feb. 11 and 25 1967, Madrid).

ii Plays only available in journals

"The House of Lot" in New Mexico Quarterly (Vol. 20, no. 1, Spring 1950, Albuquerque.) This play would appear to underly part of La puerta grande, one of the Tres novelas teresianas, see above.

"Los heroes" in Between Worlds (vol. 1, Summer 1960).

D Poetry

"Sonetos y epigramas" in Poemas (no. 9, Aug. 1964, Zaragoza).

El libro armilar de la poesía y memorias bisietas (Mexico, 1974) - contains everything previously published in Las imágenes migratorias (Mexico, 1960), which contained "Syllaba cándida" - previously published in Cuadernos Del Congreso Por La Libertad De La Cultura (no. 18, May-June 1956, Paris - and "Syllaba idílica" - previously published in Papeles de Son Armadans (Año IV, vol. 12, no. 36, 1958, Palma de Mallorca.)

E Non-fiction Articles and Books

i Books and collections of articles

El problema religioso en México (Madrid, 1928)

América antes de Colón (Valencia, 1930)

Teatro de masas (Valencia, 1932)

Casas Viejas (Madrid, 1933) - later became Viaje a la aldea del crimen, see below.

Carta de Moscú sobre el amor (a una muchacha española) (Madrid 1934.)

Madrid-Moscú (Madrid, 1934)

Viaje a la aldea del crimen (Madrid, 1934) - later incorporated into El verdugo afable and The Affable Hangman, see above.

Proclamación de la sonrisa (Madrid, 1934)

Crónica del pueblo en armas (Madrid/Valencia, 1936)

Primera de acero (Madrid, 1937) - a chapter of Contraataque, see below.

Contre-attaque en Espagne (Paris, 1937) - a translation of Contraataque, see above.

The War in Spain (London, 1937) - a translation of Contraataque see below.

Counter-attack in Spain (Boston, 1937) - a translation of Contraataque, see below.

Contraataque (Madrid-Barcelona, 1938)

Unamuno, Baroja, Valle-Inclán y Santayana (Mexico) 1955, -- extended to become Examen de ingenios: los noventayochos, see below.

* Examen de ingenios: los noventayochos (New York, 1961 - in addition to essays of Unamuno, Baroja... see above, also contains studies of Azorín, Maeztu and modern Spanish poetry.

Valle-Inclán y la dificultad de la tragedia (Madrid, 1965) - a development of one of the essays in Examen de ingenios, see above, subsequently republished as "Flor de Santidad y la dificultad tragedia" in Ramón del Valle-Inclán: An Appraisal of his life and works (New York, 1968).

Ensayos sobre el infringimiento cristiano (Mexico, 1967)

* Tres ejemplos de amor y una teoría (Madrid, 1969) and (Madrid 1970) - together with new material contains a shortened version of Carta de Moscú, see above, and a quotation from an article published previously, neither the journal nor the article are named.

Ensayos del otro mundo (Barcelona, 1970) - a new collection of articles all published previously in journals or newspapers.

ii Prefaces

Isaac Pacheco Hernández: Primero de mayo (Madrid, 1934).

Oliver La Farge: El indio y su destino (Mexico, 1941)

Valle-Inclan: Sonatas (New York, 1961)

iii Contributions to Books

"Reflexiones sobre el amor" in Libro de Las primeras jornadas eugénicas españolas (vol.1, ed. Enrique Noguera and Luis Huerta, Madrid, 1934)

"Pío Baroja y su obra" in Baroja y su mundo (vol.2, ed. Fernando Baeza, Madrid 1961), previously published as "Pío Baroja a través de su obra" in Cuadernos Del Congreso Por La Libertad De La Cultura (vol.22, Jan-Feb 1957, Paris).

Los intelectuales ante el Vietnam (ed. C. Woolf and J Bagguley, Madrid-Barcelona 1962).

iv Articles referred to in this thesis, hitherto not listed.

"On a Really Austere Aesthetic" in Books Abroad (vol.16, no.2, April 1942, Norman, Oklahoma.)

v Other main Articles

With a writer as prolific as Sender who has contributed to books, journals and newspapers throughout North and South America, no bibliography can hope to be complete in respect of separately published articles. The following is a list of the main journals and newspapers to which Sender has been a contributor. A double asterisk (**) indicates publications containing many articles. Further details may be obtained by consulting the bibliographies listed in Section Two, A and E.

Américas (Washington) - Spanish and English editions.

Books Abroad (Norman, Oklahoma)

Combate (San José, Costa Rica)

Cordillera (La Paz)

La Crónica (Lima)

Cuadernos americanos (Mexico)

Cuadernos Del Congreso Por La Libertad De La Cultura (Paris)

Estilo (San Luis, Potosí)

Frente Libertario (Paris)

Harpers Magazine (New York)

Ibérica (New York) - Spanish and English editions. **

Lectura (Mexico) **

Leviatán (Madrid)

La Libertad (Madrid) **

El Mercurio (Valparaíso)

The Nation (New York)

The New Leader (New York) **

New Masses (New York)

New Mexico Quarterly (Albuquerque)

The New York Times, Book Review (New York)

Occidente (Santiago de Chile)

Partisan Review (New Brunswick, New Jersey)

Política (Caracas)

Revista Iberoamericana (Mexico)

Saturday Review (New York)

El Sol (Madrid) **

Solidaridad Obrera (Madrid)

El Universal (Caracas)

SECTION TWO - Works on Sender

A Books dedicated entirely to Sender

Josefa Rivas: El escritor y su senda (Mexico 1967) - formerly a doctoral thesis, see below.

Francisco Carrasquer: "Imán" y la novela histórica de Sender (Zaandijk, 1968) and (London 1970)* - formerly a doctoral thesis.

Marcelino C. Peñuelas: Conversaciones con Ramón J. Sender (Madrid, 1970)

Marcelino C. Peñuelas: La obra narrativa de Ramón J. Sender. (Madrid, 1971)

Ramón Sender: Páginas escogidas (ed. Peñuelas, Madrid, 1972)

Charles L. King: Ramón J. Sender (New York, 1974)

B Books containing articles on Sender, consulted or referred to in this thesis.

Angel Valbuena Prat: Historia de la literatura española, vol.III (Madrid 1957)

Sherman H. Eoff: The Modern Spanish Novel (New York, 1961)

Juan Luis Alborg: Hora actual de la literatura española, (vol.II) (Madrid, 1962)

Eugenio de Nora: La novela española contemporánea, vols.II and III (Madrid, 1962)

Jose R. Marra-López: Narrativa española fuera de España 1939-61 (Madrid, 1963)

J. Simón Díaz: Manual de bibliografía española (3 parts, Barcelona 1966 and 1972)

J. García López: Historia de la literatura española (Barcelona 1964)

A. Iglesias Laguna: Treinta años de novela española 1938-68 (Madrid, 1969)

Narraciones de la España desterrada (ed. Rafael Conte, Barcelona 1970)

Rafael Bosch: La novela española del siglo XX (New York, 1971)

José Luis S. Ponce de León: La novela española de la guerra civil (Madrid, 1971)

Emir Rodríguez Monegal: Tres testigos españoles de la guerra civil (Caracas, 1971)

Gerald Brown: A Literary History of Spain: The Twentieth Century (London, 1972)

Antonio Tovar: Novela española e hispanoamericana (Madrid-Barcelona, 1972)

C Theses on Sender to which reference has been made.

Vivian R. Trevarrow: "The Spanish Revolution and the Civil War as seen in Some of the Modern Novels of Spain" (M.A., University of Southern California, 1940)

Charles L. King: "An Exposition of the Synthetic Philosophy of Ramón Sender" (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1953)

Charles F. Olstad: "The Novels of Ramón Sender: Moral Concepts in Development" (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1960)

Rosario Losada Jávega: "Algunos aspectos de la novela española en la emigración: Ramón Sender" (Ph.D., University of Barcelona, 1964)

Josefa Rivas: "La senda de Sender" (Ph.D., University of Valencia, 1964) — became El escritor y su senda, see above.

C. Smith: "The historical novels of Ramón J. Sender and the myths and rhetoric of 'triumphalism'" (Ph.D., University of Cambridge, March 1975)

Peter Turton: "La trayectoria ideológica de Ramón Sender entre 1928 y 1961" (Ph.D., University of Laval, 1970)

D Articles on Sender appearing in journals, referred to in this thesis

G.G. Brown: A review of Francisco Carrasquer's "Imán" y la novela histórica de Sender in The Modern Language Review, vol. 68 no. 3 (London, July 1973).

Diego Galán: "Ramón Sender regresar es morir un poco" in Triunfo (Año XXIX, no. 610, June 8, 1974, Madrid)

Jaime Lluís y Navas: "Los sentimientos edípicos en la novelística de Ramón Sender" in Boletín Informativo-Instituto de Medicina Psicológica (Año V, no. 49, December 1963, Barcelona).

'Pozuelo': "Cuando regresan los rojos" in Triunfo (Año XXIX, no. 610, June 8, 1974, Madrid.)

E Other Articles on Sender and Bibliographies

Section Two, — B, C, and D, — may be completed by reference to the bibliographies of A, and to the following:

Dena Domenicali: "A Bibliography of The Works by and about Ramón José Sender in the English Language" in Bulletin of Bibliography (vol. 20, nos. 3-4, September-December 1950, January — April 1951 Westwood, Massachusetts.)

Enrique Gastón Sanz: Apport à l'étude de "Bizancio" de Ramón Sender (Publications du Centre Européen Universitaire, Nancy, 1965)

Charles L. King: "Una bibliografía senderiana española 1928-1967" in Hispania (vol.50, October 1967, Wichita, Kansas) - works by and on Sender in Spanish with the exception of newspaper articles.

Charles L. King: "A Senderian Bibliography in English, 1950-1968, with an Addendum" in The American Book Collector (vol.20, no.6, March-April 1970 Chicago) - a continuation of Domenicali's bibliography, see above, with some additions. Also includes reviews in English of books only appearing in Spanish.

Elizabeth Espadas: "Ensayo de una bibliografía sobre la obra de Sender" in Papeles de Son Armadans (vol.24, nos.220-222, July-Aug.-Sept. 1974, Palma de Mallorca.) In two parts: "Estudios sobre su obra en general" and "Estudios sobre obras individuales". Very full: mentions critical works in Spanish, English, French, Dutch, German and Italian.

SECTION THREE - Other works consulted or referred to in this thesis

E.M.Almedingen: Catherine the Great (London, 1963)

Andrés Amorós: Introducción a la novela contemporánea (Salamanca, 1966)

William C. Atkinson: A History of Spain and Portugal (Harmondsworth, 1961)

Max Aub: Campo de almendros (Mexico, 1968)

Max Aub: Historias de mala muerte (Mexico, 1965)

Francisco Ayala: Cuentos (Salamanca, 1966)

Francisco Ayala: Muertes de perro (Buenos Aires, 1958)

Arturo Barea: La forja de un rebelde (3 vols. , Buenos Aires 1951)

Berenguer: Campanas en el Rif y Yebala 1921-22

H.J.Blackham: Six Existentialist Thinkers (London, 1961)

Gerald Brenan: The Spanish Labyrinth (Cambridge, 1962)

Pedro Calderón de la Barca: La vida es sueño (ed. A.E.Sloman, (Manchester 1961)

Raymond Carr: Spain 1808-1939 (Oxford, 1970)

Jose-María Castellet: La hora del lector (Barcelona, 1956)

Chambers Encyclopaedia (15 vols.) (London, 1950)

The Dialectics of Liberation (ed. David Cooper, Harmondsworth, 1968).

Fernando Díaz-Plaja: La guerra de España en sus documentos (Barcelona 1973)

Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europea-americano (Espasa-Calpe, Madrid-Barcelona 1905-30.)

Encyclopaedia Britannica (24 vols. Chicago, London, 1971)

Freud: The Interpretation of Dreams (vol.VII of The Complete Works of Freud. London, 1953).

Salvador Giner: Continuity and Change: The Social Stratification of Spain (University of Reading 1968)

Gabriel Jackson: The Spanish Republic and the Civil War (Princeton, New Jersey, 1967)

Peter Kropotkin: Memoirs of a Revolutionist (London, 1906)

Peter Kropotkin: Mutual Aid (Harmondsworth, 1972)

- Pierre Choderlos de Laclos: Les Liasons Dangereuses (Paris 1961)
- D.H.Lawrence: Women in Love (Harmondsworth, 1961)
- C.S.Lewis: The Discarded Image (Cambridge, 1971)
- Antonio Machado: Nuevas canciones y de un cancionero apócrifo (ed. Jose-Maria Valverde, Madrid 1971)
- Miguel de Molinos: Guía espiritual (Barcelona, 1906)
- Derek Malcolm: Untitled article on The Night Porter - interview with Dirk Bogarde in Guardian (Monday, October 28, 1974.)
- J.P.Nettl: The Soviet Achievement (London, 1967)
- George Orwell: Homage to Catalonia (Harmondsworth, 1962)
- Plato: The Republic (Cambridge, 1966)
- H.T.F.Rhodes: The Satanic Mass (London, 1954)
- Bertrand Russell: The History of Western Philosophy (London, 1954)
- S.Sobrequés: España geográfica (Barcelona, 1969)
- Jorge Solé-Tura: Introducción al régimen político español (Barcelona, 1970)
- Emma Susana Speratti Piñero: De "Sonata de otoño" al esperpento (London, 1968)
- Baruch Spinoza: Tractatus de Intellectus Emendations (tr. W.Hale White, London 1899).
- Ramón Tamames: Estructura económica de España (Madrid, 1970)
- Teresa de Jesús: Vida (London, 1912)
- Hugh Thomas: The Spanish Civil War (Harmondsworth, 1965)
- Gonzalo Torrente Ballester: Panorama de la literatura contemporánea (Madrid, 1956)
- H.R.Trevor-Roper: The European Witch Craze of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Harmondsworth 1969)
- David Turner: Unamuno's Webs of Fatality (London, 1974)
- Miguel de Unamuno: Niebla (Madrid, 1971)
- Pierre Vilar: Spain: A Brief History (Oxford, London, Edinburgh etc. 1967)
- Edmund Wilson: To the Finland Station (London and Glasgow, 1960)
- George Woodcock: Anarchism (Harmondsworth, 1963)